

Author
Simotti

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Wataru!!!

The Hot Blooded
Fighting Teen
&

**His EPIC ADVENTURES After STOPPING
a TRUCK with His BARE HANDS!!!**

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Prologue: The Finale that Took the World by Storm!

RIP, Wataru!

The year was 2020, a couple of decades after the end of the millennium! Wataru Ito, just your ordinary Japanese high schooler, six foot four with god-like muscles, was going... to school! Shockingly, it was four in the morning! That's early! Why so early!? Dear Readers, it's only natural that you would be astonished! This, however, was nothing more and nothing less than his daily routine! Leave his house at four! Get to school! And practice his spelling before class! Who among us could refuse the urge to send our stupendous Wataru the biggest *bravo*!?

Just like any other day, Wataru, in his pitch-black school uniform, was sprinting down the sidewalk at 120 km/h, when suddenly! A Red Light appeared at the crosswalk!

"Brk!!!" Wataru channeled all his might into bracing himself, stunningly stopping himself a full three feet short of the crosswalk!

"Th-That was a close one... Crossing on red is suicide...!"

It goes without saying that crossing a crosswalk on red is a serious felony! Seconds later, the light at the crosswalk turned green, as if to applaud Wataru as he was helplessly stopped in his tracks!

"Gotta go fast!"

Wataru immediately looked to his right! Then to his left! And once again to his right, without a shred of complacency! How many foolish men and women have lost their lives for failing to perform this simple precaution!? But worry not, Dear Readers! Wataru was never complacent! He sprinted across the street at top speed! Suddenly, the unthinkable happened!

"Wha!?!?"

Oh, the humanity! A truck came barreling around the blind 90-degree corner to his left! A horrific accident that no amount of precaution could have

prevented! And the truck was —unmistakably!— a 10-tonner! A monstrous monster of a machine, scientifically named *Truckus Giganticus*! Out of control, the truck plowed into Wataru, maintaining its insane speed! Dead as a doornail! Gory, R-Rated death scene incoming! ...If Wataru was any other man! But I repeat: worry not, Dear Readers! Wataru is invincible! An ordinary, invincible highschooler! Not one who would die from the mere impact of a *Truckus Giganticus* going at its Maximum Velocity!

“Trk!!!!!”

Without so much as a single shred of panic, Wataru spread his arms wide and expelled the air from his mighty lungs! Flexing all the muscles in his body, he stopped the 10-ton truck right in its tracks!

KRRRRsmashakablammmmm! The crash echoed through the morning air!

Behold! The form he used to stop the truck was none other than Carstop*, a stance from the *Ryukyu Bujutsu*, a form of martial arts passed down from Ancient Okinawa.

(*Carstop: A move invented by a young man studying karate in Ryukyu, around the year 1200. The user lowers his stance, spreads his arms open wide, and braces for the opponent to come charging into him. By using all four limbs to reduce the impact of the collision, the user can bring his opponent to a halt without suffering any injuries to his own person. A few days after inventing Carstop, the young man went on to defeat the legendary beast of Ryukyu, the *Shisa*. It goes without saying that Carstop was the move that decided their epic contest. [1])

Now, allow me to explain, Dear Readers! Wataru held the 10th dan in both karate and judo! His hobbies were sumo and kendo! His grip strength was a mind-blowing 1000 pounds! He was, through and through, a *fighting teenager!!!* Therefore, worry not about Wataru, run over by a truck! Instead, worry about the driver, he whose truck runneth over! A 10-ton truck going from full speed to a full stop in an instant places unimaginable stresses on the driver’s body! The one in danger at this very moment was, in fact, the driver!

“Dammit!!!”

Wataru believed in the kindness of *Bushido*, like any Japanese boy should! He

realized that, if he continued to allow the truck to stop itself against his invulnerable, unassailable, immovable form, the force would be the death of the driver! He couldn't help but... loosen his grip! I must insist, Dear Readers, that Wataru was not being complacent! His only weakness was that he was too kind! Then...!

Shwabamalammathooooooooom!!!!!!

"Nrrrrragh!"

Wataru was hurled away by the truck! He flew for over 150 feet! His head collided with the asphalt! The Mighty Wataru... passed out!! While we're at it, the road exploded on impact!!!! The passersby, businessmen coming home after a night of drinking and nightclub hosts coming off of work, were utterly confused!

H-How could this be!? Wataru, unconscious!? Of course, he probably wasn't dead, but even this was a shocking turn of events! This rollercoaster conclusion to our story must evoke tears of amazement from our Dear Readers! However, seeing as our protagonist is unconscious, I'm afraid I can't continue to write this book until he comes to! This is the end of the story!!!

Every remaining page will be dedicated to the postscript!!!!!!!!!!

Farewell, Wataru! Your hardcore battle will be forever ingrained into the minds of our Dear Readers!!!!!!

This has been *WATARU!!! The Hot-Blooded Fighting Teen & His Epic Adventures After Stopping a Truck with His Bare Hands!!*

THE!!!!!! END!!!!!!

*Sources:

[1] *Ryukyu Karate and Physics 101* — Isekai Tensei Publishing

Chapter 1: It's A Miracle! Wataru, Reincarnated!

“...Urr...”

Wataru woke up in a field! He slowly rose to his feet, and looked around!

“...Wh-Where am I!?!?”

Who could have blamed him for being surprised!? Just moments earlier, he had been sent hurtling by a truck and crashed into the asphalt! But somehow, he was now standing in a tranquil field of grass he had never before seen in his life!!! The sky was endlessly blue and clear, with a nice refreshing breeze grazing his skin! Dear Readers, you must be as clueless as he was as to what had just happened! In the next instant, our hero heard a voice coming from beside him!

“Good... You finally came to...”

“!!!!!!!!!!!!”

A feminine voice! Of all the things he could have woken up to, there was a petite, cute girl standing there! How could this be!? Wataru, who held the 10th dan in both karate and judo, had not been able to detect this girl right next to him!? Even if he had been unconscious and thus completely helpless, the mere fact was too pathetic for words!

“Who the hell are you!?” Wataru shouted!!! The girl was nearly brought to tears! She, by the way, had soft brown hair, held in place with a cute, white headband! She was dressed in a clean, pure-white, one-piece dress! Her shoes were black sandals, easy to move in! Her age was maybe 17! That is, the same age as Wataru! Wataru should have been ashamed! How dare a Japanese, *bushido*-abiding male yell at such a dainty *mademoiselle*!? Utterly unacceptable!!!

“M-My name... is Aria...” the girl said, trembling!



“Aria! I’m sorry I yelled!!!” Wataru bellowed! Having realized his mistake from seeing the terror on Aria’s face, Wataru immediately dove down to all fours in a *dogeza*, a Japanese bow reserved for the most extreme displays of apology! And sorry he was indeed, from the bottom of his heart!!

“Aria! Hit me!” Wataru declared with a face as horrifying as a gargoyle’s, leaping to his feet! This was his way of showing how sorry he was! But, of course, it only terrified poor Aria even more! He could not have made a worse decision!

“U-Um, I’m not going to hit you... But what happened to you? I came out to pick some herbs and found you on the ground. I was worried, so I was watching until you...”

“Right! What happened!? I was just going to school like normal, when I was almost run over by a truck! When I opened my eyes, I was here!!!!!!” Wataru shouted from the depths of his soul, lost in complete and utter confusion!

Then, a rustling was heard from the bushes in the distance! Wataru immediately and instinctively clenched his fists, instantly on guard!

“Who goes there!?!?!?”

Two people emerged from the bushes at the sound of Wataru’s intimidating summons! They were massive, tall in stature, with green skin and pig-like faces...! In fact, I’d go so far as to say that these weren’t people at all!!!

“O-Orcs...!”

“Orcs???”

What!? Are!? Orcs!? We’re all screaming it! I know you are!

“Y-You don’t know what orcs are? They’re pig-faced, humanoid monsters. They often attack and rob travelers around these parts!” An impeccable exposition! Thanks for the concise explanation, Aria!!

“Heh heh heh, fork over all you got!”

“That’s right! Don’t you fight back!”

The orcs held up their clubs! Among warriors, this was an unmistakable

declaration of battle! Wataru immediately readied himself!

“Are you... the bad guys...!?” Wataru asked, his fists held high!

“Gheh! Do we look like the good guys?”

“Just give us your money, punk!”

With no more time for discourse, the pair of orcs swung their clubs with scary expressions on their porcine faces!

“Ahh!” Aria turned away in fear!

Wataru, however, did not falter one iota!! In fact, he bravely took a single step forward, then dove directly within range of the orcs’ attacks!!!

“Sorry, but... It’s time to do a little lawn work!!!”

He began to throw punch after punch with both fists!!! It was a machine gun-like rush of super-speed punches!! Allow me to explain! This move was none other than Gatling Knuckles, the secret weapon of the greatest boxer in American history!!

(*Gatling Knuckles: Invented by boxer Michael Adur, from Colorado, in the 1960s. His career suffered for a long time due to his short stature, but after inventing, perfecting, and using this move to his advantage, he eventually became the world flyweight champion. However, since this skill requires extraordinary shoulder strength, he was one of the only boxers to have ever used the move successfully. Some boxing fanatics call it the Legendary Attack. [2])

Fist! Fist!! Fist!!! Wataru’s fists rained down on the orcs like a powerful storm! They didn’t even have a chance to fight back before they were blown away in astonishment! Moreover, Wataru’s rush produced such powerful winds that the grass all around was uprooted and blown away! In an instant, the field became a desert, as far as the eye could see!

The orcs smashed right into a dune! Fortunately, they survived because the sand cushioned their fall! But, they had no intention of continuing this fight!! Naturally!!!

“Wh-What the hell is this guy!? Yikes!”

“He’s too strong! L-Let’s beat it!”

The pair of orcs forced their bruised bodies up and ran off with their proverbial tails between their legs! Wataru had won, masterfully!!!

“Wh-Who are you...?” Aria asked, her eyes a teensy bit wide with fear!

Dear Readers, you already know the answer! That’s right!

Wataru threw back his shoulders and shouted it to the heavens: “I am Wataru Ito! Hot-blooded Fighting Teen!!!” A moment later, he returned to his standard low roar of speaking volume and added, “...But more importantly, where am I!?”

Aria was taken aback by the question! “Where...? We’re on the Wind Continent, of course.”

Wataru’s expression shifted in astonishment!

“W-Wind Continent...!? I’m not in Japan!?!?!?”

“‘Japan’???” Aria tilted her head as she repeated the unfamiliar name! “I don’t know what you’re talking about... But there’s no country on this continent called ‘Japan.’”

“How can this be!?!?!?”

Wataru was confused by Aria’s explanation! This could only mean that the impact of the truck colliding with him had teleported him to a different world! But how could something so unrealistic have happened!? It was impossible!!! The very idea wasn’t just illogical, it was ridiculous! Preposterous!

“But there’s something else you need to know, Wataru.”

“What!?!?!?”

“You’ve hurt your arm.”

“Hrm-mhurm!?!?”

He looked down at his right arm and discovered a tiny scrape. Of course, such a little thing would never be considered an injury to the likes of Wataru, a TRUE MAN! A couple of squats and he’d be as good as new!!

“Let me take a look.”

“Wha!?!?”

Suddenly, Aria gently touched his arm! Wataru’s breath was taken away!

“S-Stop it! A young lady like you shouldn’t touch a man like that!”

Wataru, a virgin, immediately tore his arm away from her hand! For all his mental training, he didn’t stand a chance against the embarrassment of Being Touched by a Girl!

“Hold on! I just want to heal it!”

“What!? Then go ahead and touch me!!!” As long as she was touching him for a good reason!

Aria placed her hand against Wataru’s arm once more, and a bright green glow began to appear where she touched him! Wataru was exactly as surprised as I know you must be at this very instant, Dear Readers!

“You glowed!? Wh-What... kind of martial arts is this!?”

Even more surprisingly, when she lifted her hand, the skin below was completely healed!!

“Martial arts? No, this is magic,” Aria countered, as if this was something Wataru already should have known!

“Magic...!!!”

He had heard of that! Magic! That thing that comes up in a lot of fantasy fiction! That thing!

“H-How could this be...!? Then I’m really...! Not in my world anymore...!?!?”

Not even Wataru could keep himself from feeling a sense of dismay at this revelation! There was no magic in the world he came from, so if there was magic here in this world, obviously it was not his!!

But...!

Another of Wataru’s amazing talents is his alacrity in getting over bad news!!

“Okay, then, Aria!!! Who’s the strongest in this country!?”

“The strongest? Well, that has to be the Demon Lord...”

“Hm. Zhe Moon Lao, you say... Is he Chinese? If he is, then he must be formidable indeed...”

China had an amazingly long 4000 years of history on its side! Therefore, Chinese kung fu, as it is passed down from generation to generation and being improved upon all the while, would have to be extremely powerful! It was said that a true master of kung fu would be able to defeat any technological weapon of the modern era!! This Master Moon Lao was sure to be a worthy adversary!

“Chinese...? I don’t know what that is, but I don’t think so. The Demon Lord is the king of all monsters. Like those orcs, earlier.”

Ah ha! So he didn’t use kung fu!!!

“I got it! First things first, I have to fight him!”

Dear Readers, I can hear you shriek: “Why!?” Easy! No matter what situation he was in, it was Wataru’s destiny as a hot-blooded fighting teen to go find anyone stronger than him!!

“The Demon Lord lives in a big castle, north of here. But the Demon Lord is very powerful...”

“That’s what I like to hear!” Wataru said, and took off running to the north!

“You’re going south!”

“Wha!?”

Whoops! How was Wataru supposed to tell north from south in this world, anyway!?

“Wait, Wataru! Take me with you!”

“I can’t! Bringing a girl to a fight!? Ridiculous!!!”

“The truth is, my parents are imprisoned in the Demon Lord’s castle!”

“Sh...! Shocking...” Wataru couldn’t conceal his dismay at the suddenly serious tone that this introduced into the story!! What a twist!!!

“From what I hear, the Demon Lord, in his conquest to push the human race to extinction, is kidnapping people from all over the world... And my parents are doctors, so they were kidnapped, too!”

Outrageous! Wataru was incensed, twitching his impeccably built pectorals in fury!!

“H-How dare he! Okay, let’s go get your parents back!”

And so, Wataru and Aria embarked on their hot-blooded adventure!

The pair immediately began walking north, heading towards the Demon Lord’s castle. The cloudless blue sky was infinitely grand and picturesque, and the rays of sunlight beaming down on them looked divine. The sky in this world looked the same to Wataru as the one in his old world. Wataru felt a sensation akin to nostalgia as he explained to Aria that he had come from another world. Naturally, she was confused, but after she patiently listened to Wataru’s hardcore and thorough explanation, she finally came to understand his situation.

A few minutes after Wataru finished describing what had happened to him, they reached the edge of a giant, dungeon-esque forest.

“Going around this forest will take us too long. Let’s cut straight through, Wataru.”

“Right!”

The pair stepped into the forest without hesitation. It was a thicket of mossy trees, strangely humid and dark despite it being the middle of the day. The mysterious yet terrifying forest was reminiscent of the Forest of Fuji, a family-friendly sightseeing spot in the province of Yamanashi.

“Something’s not right about this forest...!!”

“Wataru, I once heard that the way to the Demon Lord’s castle is guarded by powerful monsters called the Four Masters. I’m sure there’s one of these monsters in this forest.”

The Four Masters! AKA “The Elite Four,” “The Four Heavenly Kings,” “The Fearsome Foursome,” among other things! The top guardians of Demon Lords throughout any number of fantasy series! The inflators of word counts found in so many light novels!!!

“Hmm!!! Is that one up there!?”

Wataru’s trained eyesight spotted a knight standing alone in the forest! The knight’s armor was pitch-black and wickedly spiked, with a skull-like helmet to complete the whole ensemble! It looked pretty freaking sweet!

When the two approached the knight, the knight puffed out its chest and declared with a laugh: “Mwahahahaha! I am Résistance, one of the Four Masters! The most powerful knight of the realm, thoroughly and unequivocally loyal to the Demon Lord!”

The knight’s voice seemed androgynous, so I will refrain from using any gendered pronouns, for now! *Résistance*, as the acute accent in the word may suggest, is French! It means “rebellion”! Or “resistance”! Which, now that I think about it, makes it the worst name imaginable for a loyal knight!!!

“Grr!!! I sense a dark aura... This knight can fight...!!!”

Wataru was intimidated by Résistance’s nefarious aura! But he couldn’t afford to back down now!

“If you wish to proceed, you’ll have to go through me!”

“Done!!!!!”

Surprise attack! Without a moment’s hesitation, Wataru kicked off the ground to sprint at an incredible speed!

“Raaaaaghh!!”

He rapidly closed the distance between them! Clenching his right fist, he threw a punch smack-dab against the knight’s armor with all his might!!!

“Smsh!!!!!”

And yet...!

“Hmph. That’s all you got!?”

“Wh-What...!?”

Résistance was as cool as a cucumber, without having budged a single inch after taking Wataru’s punch directly to the chest. The knight’s black armor was much harder than Wataru had imagined!

“Grr... I’m not done yet!!”

Now, Wataru leapt high into the air and pistoned one leg out, aiming a jump-kick into his opponent’s face—I mean, into that awesome skull helmet!

“Hmph!” Résistance ducked calmly, dodging the kick!

“Damn!”

Wataru’s attack missed! Despite wearing such heavy, full-body armor, Résistance was astoundingly quick on his or her feet!

“Now it’s my turn! Hragh!” Résistance produced a giant sword from within his or her armor, and raised it high above him or her!

“Wataru! Look out!” Aria shouted!

“Grrrraggghhh!” Résistance swung down his or her weapon!

“Ddg!!!”

Wataru instinctively dove backwards, avoiding the sword by a hair! Even Wataru would suffer more than a scratch if he took a slash like that!

“Mwahahahahaha! Wataru, was it? Can’t you do any better than that?” Résistance laughed, smug amusement oozing from underneath his or her helmet.

Upon this mockery, Wataru snapped!

“Then... Spd!!!!!!”

With a sharp shout, he sprinted toward Résistance, at the impossible speed of 130 km/h! Considering that the top speed of the world-famous athlete, Usain Bolt, was 36.57 km/h, we can see how ridiculously powerful Wataru’s leg muscles were!! He jumped again with inhuman force behind his step, and made another jump-kick!

Drsh!!!

Wataru’s foot collided with Résistance’s armor, the sound of the impact echoing through the forest! So powerful was the impact that the knight couldn’t help but take a step back!!

“Grr... That wasn’t bad! All right, I’ll unleash my full power!”

With that, Résistance swung his or her sword down at Wataru! Danger, Wataru Ito!!

But, then—!!!!

“Ctch!!!!”

“I-It can’t be!”

Wataru had caught the blade of the sword between his bare hands! How surprising!

“A-A Shinken Shirahadori!!” Résistance cried out in astonishment.

But let me be clear... This was no ordinary *Shinken Shirahadori*!!!!

“Your buddy here... is going to get a little shorter...!!!!” Wataru threatened in a growl!

Then!

Snappppp!!!!

With a twist of his waist, he snapped the sword in his hands!!! He broke a steel sword in half with nothing but pure muscles!!!

“That’s incredible, Wataru!” Aria tossed another compliment at Wataru! Not even our Dear Readers can stop themselves from feeling satisfied by how well she was playing the role of the light novel heroine!!! But without warning, a piece of the sword that Wataru had snapped off stabbed Aria right in the forehead!

“Grraaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaagggggggggggghhhhhhhhhhhhh
hhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh-hhh-
ggggggggggggggggggghhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh-ghghghghghghghghghgh!!”

Blood spewed out of her forehead! How was this allowed to happen to such a picture-perfect light-novel heroine!?



“Are you okay, Aria!?!?!?”

Of course, it was no problem! She could use healing magic!

Now, allow me to explain to our Dear Readers who may not be hot-blooded fighters! The move Wataru just performed is called the Hot-blooded Shinken Shirahadori!

(*Hot-blooded Shinken Shirahadori: A technique invented by a master of hardcore karate at the end of the feudal era. The move is most well known for aggressively snapping the blade the user catches in their bare hands. According to legend, this martial artist went into battles completely unarmed, and broke the swords of countless samurai with his bare hands. He was given the name “the Blade-Snapping Warrior,” and was widely feared by the samurai at the time. [3])

“...Damn it! My sword, the soul of a knight, broken in half...! I’ll admit it! You have bested me!”

Résistance surrendered with surprising ease for such a supposedly loyal knight!

“You did it, Wataru! You defeated the first of the Four Masters, and so soon!”

“That I did!”

It was amazing how fast it all happened! We’re still in Chapter 1 and he already took out the first of the Demon Lord’s Four Masters! Without warning, Résistance reached up and cast aside the skull helmet! Résistance’s naked face was suddenly revealed!

“Wh-What the...!?”

Wataru figuratively clutched his pearls in shock! It turned out that Résistance was a beautiful woman!! Her attractive, Western features were accented by long, silky blue hair! Her skin was as smooth and white as marble!



Her eyes were the same pretty blue as her hair, so alluring that anyone who stared too long into them might become lost!

“I thought you sounded androgynous... You’re a woman! I’m sorry I hit you!” Wataru apologized, meaning every word! As a proud Japanese male, he would never have struck a woman if he had known!

Aria was curious, however. “Wait, you’re obviously human... Why are you helping the Demon Lord as one of his Four Masters?”

Résistance answered with a stoic expression: “I once challenged the Demon Lord to a duel. He defeated me without much effort... I thought he was going to kill me, but he demanded that I serve him as a fighter. That is why I’ve sworn my loyalty to the Demon Lord.”

Once again, it made little sense that a loyal knight would have the name Résistance! I fear that this knight did not look too far into the meaning of the word when she decided to call herself that!!

“The Demon Lord... let a human live...?” Aria asked, dumbfounded! With her parents kidnapped by the Demon Lord, who could blame her for doubting the validity of Résistance’s backstory!?

“The Demon Lord aims to exterminate weaker species. That’s why he wants to bring humanity to extinction. On the other hand, he has a place for people like me, with a certain caliber of strength in combat.”

“I see! Then, Résistance... Do you agree with him!? With the Demon Lord!?!?!?” Wataru demanded, glaring at the knight!

She slowly shook her head! “Not exactly... But now that I owe him a life debt, he is undoubtedly my master. As a knight, my master’s ideology shouldn’t concern me.”

“Huh, okay... I don’t really get it, but whatever!! We’re off to the Demon Lord’s castle!! See ya!!!”

Wataru turned to head deeper into the forest, but Résistance reached for his arm!

“Wait!”

“S-Stop it! A young woman like you shouldn’t go around touching men!”

Wataru the virgin ripped his arm away at the speed of sound! He had been unaware of Résistance’s gender until only a few moments ago, but now that he knew she was a she, not an androgynous, faceless, enemy, he wasn’t comfortable being touched by her!

“I must ask a favor of you, Wataru. Allow me to join you on your quest.”

Wataru, Aria, and all our Dear Readers gasped in astonishment at hearing this!

“Wh-What!?”

“Does that mean you’re betraying the Demon Lord to be on our side!?” Aria asked.

“Not quite. I’m not betraying the Demon Lord, per se—just making myself neutral,” Résistance answered, brushing out her beautiful blue hair with an air of utter neutrality!

“Don’t try to muddy the water with semantics! Wataru, we can’t trust her! It’s dangerous!” Aria frantically protested! But she had a point!

“...Why do you want to come along in the first place!?”

“Because I’m interested in what lies ahead of you, Wataru. Maybe you can defeat the Demon Lord, when I couldn’t. I want to see how your story ends.”

“Huh, you want to see what my journey holds, huh!? All right!! Then we’re good! Come along!!!”

Wataru accepted Résistance’s group application with astonishing speed! Aria was dumbfounded!

“Wataru! Wh-Wh-Wh-What are you thinking!?”

Aria still considered Résistance an enemy, as Aria’s parents had been kidnapped by the Demon Lord while Résistance had chosen to serve him even though she was human! Who could have blamed Aria for being taken aback by the knight’s wanting to join their party!?

“Calm down, Aria! What could possibly go wrong!?” Wataru, ever the true epitome of masculinity, remained endlessly positive, and, dare I say it, naïve.

“As I’ve said, I will be neutral from here on out. I won’t get in your way, and I won’t aid you in your battles. I’ll just be watching. That won’t be a problem then, will it?” Résistance added, hoping to dampen the fires of Aria’s rage!

“F-Fine, then...” Aria reluctantly accepted the newcomer, too!

And so Résistance joined Wataru and Aria! One of the Four Masters down, three to go! Can Wataru defeat them all and make it to the Demon Lord!? Stay tuned to find out!!!

In the center of the badlands stood a giant castle that towered into the sky. It was an impressive European-style castle built from white and black bricks, reaching nearly 50 meters at its highest points. It had no glitz or glamor about it, yet it still seemed to radiate a foreboding aura. The steel gates were sealed tight, making it plain for all to see that entry would not be easy.

The top floor of that castle was the residence of the Demon Lord Deus, the most powerful being in the world, feared by all. He looked surprisingly young, seeming to be about thirty years of age. With his chiseled Latino features and white long hair that reached his shoulders, he was unmistakably attractive. He wore a long, white coat with an easy, breezy beauty, making him the perfect foil for Wataru, who wore his black school uniform with a burning passion. Deus was six foot one with slender legs, but the most noteworthy feature of the Demon Lord... was the color of his skin. While his other features were the same as any human, his skin was a vibrant purple. Like a Gray Alien, his appearance was unsettling in a way that placed him firmly in the Uncanny Valley. To top it off, his eyes were the red hue of a roaring flame, and exuded a peculiar aura of both mystery and intelligence.

These were the typical physical characteristics of all Demons, who were stronger than humans and had purple skin. Most had red or blue eyes, and their hair was white without exception. Some Demons had horns on their head, but Deus did not.

“My Demon Lord! Th-There’s trouble afoot!”

“Hm? What’s going on...? *Nom nom...*” Deus was eating his *pudding à la mode* from a cup and relaxing on his throne when one of his messengers, a blue slime,

came rushing into the room, its body jiggling along the way.

“Résistance, one of the Four Masters, has been defeated by a human!” the slime reported with a shriek.

Deus calmly raised an eyebrow. “What...? Résistance, defeated...? *Nom nom...*”

“Yes, My Demon Lord! What’s worse, Résistance has joined the humans!”

“Oh... *Nom...*” Despite this shocking news report, Deus continued to calmly enjoy his *pudding à la mode*. “How disloyal of her... Résistance has switched sides... *Munch... Nom nom...* Perhaps it was a mistake to recruit that one as one of the Four Masters, after all... *Gulp...*” Résistance was a human, after all. Perhaps it was only natural that she would rejoin the humans so easily. “...So, who defeated Résistance?” Deus asked, having finished his treat.

The slime wobbled impressively for a moment before answering, “He called himself Wataru Ito!”

Deus’s expression froze for a moment. After a deep breath, he spoke in a decidedly collected tone. “Hm. ‘Wataru Ito’... A strange name. Not one I’ve heard on the Wind Continent...” Which should come as no surprise to you, Dear Readers, since Wataru wasn’t of this world to begin with.

“Yes, My Demon Lord! I have never heard of such a name, either!”

“In any case, that human sounds intriguing. Just like me, he’s... Hm, no matter. It would be interesting to see what he’s capable of...”

With that, Deus crossed his slender legs and reached for a second cup of *pudding à la mode*. The slime jiggled even harder than before and reprimanded its master: “M-My Demon Lord! Forgive me, but perhaps that is one pudding too many. Didn’t your doctor instruct you to limit yourself to one sweet treat per day...?”

“Shut up!! I want pudding!!!”

“Ahh!!”

The scream echoed through the room. Deus, the tyrannical Demon Lord on a quest to bring humanity to extinction... had, from his unbalanced diet, fallen ill

to a horrible disease known as... diabetes.

To be continued in the next chapter, “Wataru VS the Second of the Four Masters! The Dramatic Rap Battle!!!”

*Sources:

[2] *A Deep Dive Uncovering the Origins of the Legendary Attack, Gatling Knuckles* — Isekai Tensei Publishing

[3] *Hot-blooded Karate Encyclopedia* — Isekai Tensei Publishing

Chapter 2: Wataru VS the Second of the Four Masters! The Dramatic Rap Battle!

After Résistance became the newest member of their party, Wataru and Aria carried on through the forest, en route to the Demon Lord's castle! The forest became eerily darker and darker as they progressed, but the trio fearlessly continued their march!

"I see... So you can't use any magic, Wataru? Are you sure about challenging the Demon Lord?" Résistance asked as they walked along the unkempt path.

"My own two fists are all the magic I need to work with!!" Wataru declared triumphantly! Though Wataru also held the 10th dan in kendo, giving him some familiarity with weapons, he generally preferred to fight hand-to-hand!!

"Alright. I'm not all that proficient in magic myself, so I understand how you feel. How about you, Aria? Do you have special powers?"

"Wouldn't you like to know? Bleh!" Aria stuck both her index fingers in her mouth and made a mocking face at Résistance! Apparently, she was still far from trusting the knight after her track record of serving the Demon Lord!

"Hey, Aria! Watch the attitude! Apologize to Résistance, now!!" Wataru scolded her like a mother would her teenage daughter! But Aria ignored him and continued walking!

"No need, Wataru," said Résistance. "It's not like I'm your ally or anything. I won't pry for anything she doesn't want to share."

As they walked in slightly awkward silence, a small humanoid figure, about 20 inches from head to toe, appeared in the air before them! With a clean, cute face, a revealing outfit made from green fabric, and translucent wings on her back, she was unmistakably a fairy!

"Now hold on, you three! I'm the second of the Four Masters, Binker Tell!"

"Grrr!!! This dark aura... She's good...!!!" Wataru was intimidated by the

insidious aura surrounding Binker, the second Master, who likewise appeared conveniently early in the story!

“Sup, Binker. How are you?” Résistance casually greeted Binker!

“Hm!? Résistance, is that you!?” Binker’s cute face was transformed in shock!
“What are you doing here!?”

“It’s a long story. I’m traveling with them now,” the knight replied, pointing to Wataru!

“Does that mean... You betrayed the Demon Lord!?”

“Not precisely. I’m just neutral now.”

“What does that even mean!?” Binker could not conceal her understandable confusion!

“It’s what it sounds like. You all go on and fight, and I’ll stay out of your way.” Résistance took a single huge leap backwards, her long hair flouncing! Now she was 20 meters away from Wataru!

Binker remained hovering in the air as she stared down at Wataru, ready to fight! “I don’t really know what’s going on... But you’re going down!”

“Be careful, Wataru!” Aria called out with concern!

Wataru shouted back, as stern as a *Nio*, one of the fierce guardians of Buddha! “Right, I know!!! But... Fairy or not, I can’t attack a girl!!!” Our protagonist Wataru Ito was a hot-blooded, hardcore, Japanese male! Therefore it was inconceivable that he could bring himself to strike a woman!

“Wait, Wataru. You can’t defeat a fairy with physical attacks, anyway.”

“What!?” A shocking revelation! Fairies are immune to physical damage!

“Why not!?”

“Fairies are a species born with special magic cast upon them. We humans can’t even touch them.”

“Wh-What am I supposed to do!?!?” Wataru winced in agony!

“Ready or not, here I come!!” Flying through the air, Binker shot a magic fireball from her tiny hands!

“Rflct!!!!” Wataru smacked the fireball back with his bare hand!!! How was that possible!?!?!?

“That’s incredible, Wataru!” Aria jumped right in with a compliment!

“Ooh, not bad... But it looks like physical attacks are all you’ve got, huh?” Binker acutely assessed! She was right!

“Grr...!”

“Now that I know that, you don’t stand a chance!” The fairy expertly used the wings on her back to fly freely through the air, showering Wataru with fireballs from all angles!

“Nraaaaggghhhh!!! Aria, duck!”

“Okay!”

Protecting Aria, Wataru continued to deflect the fireballs flying in from all around them with his bare hands! While Binker was tiny, her magic was plenty powerful! She was one of the Four Masters, after all!

“We’re not getting anywhere like this... Aria! Didn’t you heal me with magic, earlier!? Can you attack with magic!?”

“I-I’m sorry... I’m only able to cast simple healing spells.”

How tragic! Wataru had no way out, now! At this rate, Binker would defeat him!

That’s when Aria realized something! “...Hold on, Wataru! I once heard that you can defeat a fairy by singing a beautiful song!”

“What!? What in the world does that mean!?!?!?”

That’s when Binker chimed in! “We fairies die if a song can make us feel strong enough emotions!”

“I didn’t know that!!” Wataru shouted! Why did Binker Tell divulge her own weakness!? “Aria! Can you sing!?”

“I’m sorry, I’m tone deaf! I can’t sing a single tune!”

Résistance called over from where she was watching the fight unfold! “I’m tone deaf, too!”

“Shut up! No one asked you!!!” Aria shouted, exploding in anger!

Despite her distrust in Résistance, this might have seemed a little too harsh to our Dear Readers... In any case, Résistance had promised not to take a side!

“Can’t you sing anything, Wataru?”

“I can’t sing any normal songs! All I can do is rap!!!”

Aria didn’t recognize that unfamiliar word!!! “‘Rap’...? What’s rap?”

“What!? There is no rap in this world!? Then it might just work!!!!!”

“It might... I’ll get a mic.” Aria produced a microphone from her pocket! Wataru took it!! ...Why was Aria carrying around a microphone!?!?!?

“It’s my turn, Binker! Get ready for my hardcore track!!!”

“Hmph! Rap, shmap, buddy-boy! Bring it on!” Binker seemed unthreatened by the thought of anything Wataru might sing!

Wataru took a deep breath, and started dropping rhymes!

Don’t be shy, Dear Readers! Let’s all sing along!!!!

Wataru Ito’s here, and I’m rockin’ the mic!!!

Stopped a truck with my hands like a little trike!!!

Now I’m at this Isekai but I don’t hear ‘sike!!!’

Gonna spit some hot fire that I know you’ll like!!!

Take this world by storm, make your neck hairs spike!!!

This hardcore n’ fighting teen’s gonna strike!!!

No tears in my eyes though, I’m a man de la men!!!

Pedal to the metal but my mind’s all zen!!!

Ain’t afraid to stick my head in the lion’s den!!!

’Cuz I’m a hot-blooded teen, I’m a tenouttaten!!!

Yeah, Boyeeeeeee!

A demented expression formed on Wataru's face as he threw these dripping lines into the air!!!

"Wh-What is this song!? I don't understand! I feel something in my chest... It- It's embarrassment! It burns!" Binker Tell twisted in the air, as if something under her skin was clawing to get out!!!

Wataru seized on this opportunity to twist the knob on his freestylin' rap flow to a mind-shattering 12! Hardcore to the max!

Keep the beat flowin', DJ!

Up this Isek-highway, I won't let up the climb!!!!

Every lady that I've met here thinks I'm sublime!!!!

Now I hope this rap battle won't take much more time!!!!

Since I'm runnin' out of lyrics that I know how to rhyme!!!!

Can't do the time? Well then don't do the crime!!!!

This'll kick your ass like you're a level-1 slime!!!!

BOO-YAH!

Wataru ended his rap, contorting his face into that of a *Nio* statue!!!! He slammed the mic down on the ground like a finishing blow and thrust his fist toward the heavens!

"These! Are my burning-hot lyrics!"

"Gragghh!! They're so bad! It hurts so much! Wh-What's happening!?!?!?" Binker writhed in pain, clearly moved by the hardcore vibin' rhymes!

Then...!

"I-I'm fading away...!"

To everyone's dismay, Binker started fading into the air!

“N-No! Nooooooooooooo!!!” With a devastated scream, she vanished!

“That was amazing, Wataru! I didn’t understand any of your ‘rap,’ though.”
Aria still couldn’t help but throw Wataru a compliment!

Now, allow me to gently explain for those of our Dear Readers who are neither hot-blooded, hardcore, nor gangsta rappers! That was a legit martial arts move, called the Dripping Fists of Rhyme!!!

(*Dripping Fists of Rhyme: The famous rap personality MC Prominence invented this martial arts move that uses the power of music in the year 2000. By rapping with burning-hot emotions, the user moves their opponent from the bottom of their heart, robbing them of their will to fight. For inventing this move, the MC was revered all around the world and eventually won the Nobel Peace Prize. After that, he continued working on his rapping career. Now, he has climbed his way up to become the leader of rap society in Tokyo. [4])

Through that fierce battle, Wataru had defeated the second of the Four Masters!

“Impressive. I didn’t expect you to take out Binker, too...” Résistance said as she approached Wataru!

“Heh, ain’t nothing but a thing!!!” Wataru gloated, crossing his arms in victory!

“But... ‘Rap,’ was it...? What country is that music from? I’ve never heard such music before.” Résistance cocked her head in curiosity!

“Hm? Oh, yeah... Well, some distant country!” Something like “*I came from another world*” would have raised even further questions, so Wataru told her this instead.

Aria picked up on what he was putting down, too! “Wataru is a traveling fighter who came here from a distant continent to defeat the Demon Lord. Right, Wataru?”

“That’s right!” Wataru said, nodding deeply!

“Oh, I see... Then Aria, where are you from?”

“Me...? The Sky Kingdom,” she answered truthfully!

“Look at you, Aria! You gave a straight answer this time!!” Wataru was a little taken aback that she answered the question at all, considering her harsh attitude toward Résistance just moments ago!

“Well, she did keep her promise that she wouldn’t intervene in your battle against the other Master... She didn’t seem like a totally evil person, at least...” Aria said, blushing in embarrassment!

Résistance returned a smile! “Good. I’m glad I was able to clear my name a bit... But aren’t we rather close to the Sky Kingdom right now?”

With a lightbulb above his head, Wataru chimed in, “Perfect! Why don’t we head there and take a break!?”

Come to think of it, Wataru hadn’t rested for a bit since coming to this world! Even Wataru, a hot-blooded fighting teen, would have a hard time fighting any more totally fearsome enemies without any downtime between his battles! Resting, to him, was just as important as training!

“Okay. Let’s all go to the Sky Kingdom, then.”

And so, Wataru’s party set course for the Sky Kingdom, Aria’s homeland!

A few hours passed, and eventually the trio arrived at the Sky Kingdom, the largest kingdom in all of the Wind Continent!

“We’re here, Wataru and Résistance! This is my homeland, the Sky Kingdom!”

“Whoa... What a fancy place!”

“Indeed. I haven’t set foot in such a prosperous city in a while.”

Rows of aesthetic wooden architecture, stone-paved roads, and markets bustling with vibrantly colored shops lay before them! A beautiful fountain, so extravagant that the mere sight of it made them feel refreshed, sat at the center of a plaza! This kingdom was practically straight out of Medieval Europe, from the history of Wataru’s old world! Wataru was moved by its magnificence!

“Hey, look at that fancy castle!” Wataru pointed at the gigantic construction before them! It was a beautiful palace of meticulously stacked yellow bricks!

“That’s the palace where the Sky King resides. It’s better made than any other castle around, so we get a lot of tourists.” Aria puffed out her chest with pride!

“Cool! By the way, Résistance, where are you from!?”

“Me? My hometown is a small fishing village near the western edge of the Wind Continent.”

“Good to know!”

No need to take notes here, Dear Readers! That piece of information will never come up in our story again!

Wataru carried on walking through the market, looking to and fro, filled with curiosity! Everything he saw was fresh and new! Every moment here would become a memory he would cherish!

But he couldn't help but make a particular observation! “Hm!?!?!? Everyone looks... unhappy!”

Correct-amundo! The market, heavily populated by shoppers, did appear bustling upon first glance. Upon closer inspection, however, all of the merchants and all of the shoppers had subdued expressions!

“That's because...” Aria began to answer, lowering her voice, “...of the Demon Lord. Like me, many people have had their friends and family taken by him...”

“I didn't know that...!” As Wataru commented, Résistance turned her eyes to the ground. As someone who had served the Demon Lord, she didn't know what to say in this kind of situation!

The owner of a nearby market stand called to them with a depressed tone! “First time in the city, young man?”

Wataru nodded. “Did the Demon Lord... take your family, too!?”

“No. I never had anyone that loved me, anyway.” The man shook his head slowly, eyes cast down! “But a lot of people here had their families kidnapped by the Demon Lord. That's not the only reason we're struggling, though.”

“What's going on???”

“Take a look at these,” the shopkeeper said, pointing to his own products on display! They were steaming, golden-brown pies! “I bake these apple pies in my kitchen and sell them out here. I import the sugar and apples from other countries, but... thanks to the Demon Lord, the trade routes have been shut

down. Once I sell what I have here, I won't have any more for who knows how long."

"What!? So, what does that mean!?" Wataru demanded!

Aria answered in the shopkeeper's stead! "The Sky Kingdom's capital is a center of trade, too. Traveling merchants visit often with the likes of jewels, crafts, and clothes from all around, but..." She paused, before continuing with a little confusion in her tone, "...for some reason, only the merchants carrying sugar or sweet fruits on their way to the kingdom are being attacked by the Demon Lord's army with alarming frequency. Because of that, merchants carrying anything sweet will no longer come here, putting our country in a historic deficit of sweets..."

"The girl said it. My business is drying up." The man crossed his arms and sighed!

"That's very... bizarre!" Wataru commented!

What inconceivable, diabolical, villainous scheme was the Demon Lord hatching!?

A few minutes after that conversation, when the group was reaching one end of the market, Aria pointed straight ahead! "If we turn that corner to the right, there's a clinic. That's where I live. The clinic's not running right now, though." Since Aria's parents, both doctors, had been captured by the Demon Lord, there was no one there now to run the clinic! "We have plenty of rooms, so you can take your pick, Wataru. Résistance."

"Thanks!"

"Yes, thank you."

Behold Aria's overwhelming generosity! She was going to lend a room even to Résistance, to whom she had been so mean in the beginning! This is the kind of characteristic we want to see from our main heroine!

Suddenly, an arrow came slicing through the air straight towards them!

"Arw!!!!!" Wataru caught the arrow with impeccable instincts! "Phew... That was close!"

“...Well, the tip of the arrow *is* digging into my forehead, Wataru,” Aria declared, blood trickling down her face! Of course, Aria could use healing magic, so this was no problem at all! Q.E.D!

“Hm? Look, Wataru. There’s a letter tied to the arrow!” Résistance astutely pointed out!

“A *yabumi*!” Wataru unfolded the piece of paper so he could read the contents out to the others! “I can’t read it!!!!”

That’s right! Wataru could not read the language of this world! *Then how can he speak it?* I hear you ask, but there’s no time to explain that now, Dear Readers!!

“Then I’ll read it.” Aria took the letter, her face soaked in blood, and began reading it aloud!

Dear Wataru the Hero,

My name is Garland, and I’m a martial artist.

I will await you at the plaza at five, tomorrow morning.

I implore you to come.

Through combat, let us determine who is stronger.

“A challenger! All right! But... how does this Garland know about me!?” Wataru crossed his arms in contemplation!

Résistance answered! “There is a saying in this continent: ‘Rumor travels faster than the wind.’ You’ve defeated two of the Four Masters, Wataru. I wouldn’t be surprised if the whole continent knew about you.”

“I get it now... Come to think of it, I sense the people on the street staring at me! Does everyone here know who we are!?”

“I think it’s just because we look so weird,” Aria interjected with this cruel assessment!

In fact, it was only natural that a large, muscular man in a black school uniform, a woman in spike-riddled armor, and a girl with a bloodied face standing all together would draw some attention!

“Wait, Résistance! You’re an ex-Master! What’s going to happen if these people find out about that!?” Wataru had a point! What *would* happen to her if she were recognized!?

“I kept my skull helmet on during my entire Master career. I wouldn’t worry about anyone recognizing me without it.” ...Résistance also had a point!! No need to worry about her, then!!!

“Why were you wearing that stupid helmet, anyway?” Aria insulted Résistance’s choice of fashion with a straight face!

“Huh? That thing was epic! What are you talking about!? It was a freaking skull! I looked like a scary boss-type character!” Résistance rushed to defend her taste, which seemed akin to that of an emo preteen!

“You might have *looked* formidable, but Wataru defeated you in a couple of pages. Where did you get that silly helmet, anyway?”

“Tot Hopic, duh. Most everything in my closet came from there.”

“Oof. You’re the worst.” Aria’s harsh criticism of the goth-geek-hybrid chain was completely uncalled for! How did those emo-wannabe preteens hurt her!?

“In any case, I accept this challenge!” Wataru grinned!

“You got this, Wataru! I’ll be there to cheer you on, too!”

“All right, thanks!”

The Sky Kingdom was the first country Wataru had come to in this world! It didn’t look like he had to worry about being bored here!

The next day, Wataru and Aria arrived at the plaza, as instructed in the letter! It was five in the morning, very early! There was no sun in the sky nor anyone else in the plaza! Résistance, by the way, was still sleeping in her room in Aria’s parents’ clinic, having told the duo the night before that she wasn’t going to cheer on Wataru because “mornings aren’t my thing.”

“Here we are at the plaza... but no one’s here!”

“...”

“Hm? What’s wrong, Aria!?!?!?!?” Aria didn’t answer! Wataru turned around, frazzled, to find Aria fast asleep with her nose flat on the ground! “No, Aria! Don’t you fall asleep here! Wake up! Hey!!!”

“*Erm... Shut up!!*”

SlIIIIIIlappppppp! In her sleep, Aria aggressively slapped Wataru straight across the face!

“Dammit, she’s a sleep-slapper! Why did she come with me, then...!?”

May I remind you, Dear Readers, that it was five in the morning! Aria had tagged along in hopes of cheering on Wataru during the fight, but alas, she could not defeat the Sandman’s sweet caress! ...What in the Isekai was going on!?

A booming shout echoed through the dim plaza! “You’ve come, Wataru!”

“...*Hrm!*” Wataru turned to the voice to find a completely bald, muscular man standing with his arms crossed facing him! His height was an unbelievable six foot four and a half! What an astonishing size! His muscles were so large that Wataru couldn’t tell if he was a man or a gorilla upon first glance, and he was wearing a tight, white shirt that did nothing but accentuate his ripped physique! The man’s face was chiseled, too! His eyes, however, were thin and gave off a gentle impression. The sheer contrast his face presented was almost alluring!

“Are you Garland, the one who challenged me!?”

“Indeed! I am Garland, the martial artist!” Garland struck a pose like a bodybuilder! With both arms raised, he bent his elbows to accentuate his upper arms! Th-There was no mistaking it! That move was none other than... the Double Biceps!!!!

“I’m not done yet!!! *Hragh!!!*”

Rrrrrrrrippppppp!!!!

As Garland flexed his muscles, the white shirt that only thinly veiled his torso practically exploded off his body, revealing the Apollo-like abs underneath!

“Y-Your muscles are incredible!!!” Wataru was amazed at Garland’s upside-down-pyramid of a bod! His abs! His biceps!!! Furthermore, Garland’s body was

covered in scars, hinting at how many times he'd had brushes with death! "Garland, your muscles are the real deal! But why do you want to fight me!?" Wataru asked, as he carried the snoring Aria to a safe location.

"Hmph. Simple, Wataru! Because you took out two of the Four Masters!" Garland answered without breaking his Mr. Universe pose! "The tales of your conquest have already reached all corners of the Sky Kingdom! Which means that you're the most famous person in this country right now!"

"All right! That's what I like to hear!"

Apparently, the rumors hadn't mentioned the fact that one of their trio was still sleeping in a clinic in the city, excluding Résistance from any danger! Now, Garland switched to a Lat Spread, where he put both fists at his waist!

"And now! All the fighters in town want a piece of you and the fame of being the one to take you down! I'm no exception!"

In short, Garland aimed to beat Wataru, who was now famous for having defeated two Masters, and take his place as the strongest fighter in the kingdom!

"Say no more! Let's fight!!!" Wataru lowered his stance, primed for battle!

"I appreciate you accepting my challenge, Wataru! Face my fists!!"

"Jmp!!!" Wataru immediately jumped right over Garland's head!

"What!?"

Upon landing, Wataru immediately went for a chop, his hand straightened like a blade! It struck Garland square on his hairless head!!

"*Graghlglaragh!*" It was only a few seconds into the fight, and Garland was already overwhelmed! Garland was much larger than Wataru physically, but the gross mass of one's muscles does not always correlate to one's prowess in combat!! "Not bad, Wataru!"

"You haven't seen anything yet!!!" Wataru and Garland traded punches, nose-to-nose! But Wataru was clearly faster than Garland!

"Pnch!!!" Wataru's punch, elevated to the point of artistic perfection, smashed deep into Garland's abdomen!

“Graghfphgharghragh!!!” Garland couldn’t help but jump back! He immediately regained his fighting stance, and charged right back at Wataru! *“Rrrrrrrragggggghhhhh!!!”*

Undaunted, Wataru squatted low! As Garland charged toward him, he countered with perfect timing with a right uppercut! Wataru’s fist found Garland’s gut again, spreading a slow but inevitable wave of pain through his body! Garland fell, speechless!!! *“It’s over, Garland!!!”*

Garland jumped back, putting some distance between him and Wataru! He was panting now, his shoulders rising and falling with every breath! *“Hragh... Hmph.* It’s too early to feel victorious, Wataru!”

“...What!?”

Somehow, Garland wore a dauntless grin, even at the very brink of defeat! What thought was flickering in his mind at this moment!? *“Ha ha ha! Can’t you tell, Wataru!? Haven’t you figured out why I demanded that we fight at five o’clock in the morning, at the crack of dawn!?!?!?”*

“Wh-What do you mean!?” Wataru was confused! He had no idea what Garland was talking about!!!

“Then allow me to explain! I was waiting for... this! This very moment! Right now!!!”

At that very moment...! The sun rose on the Sky Kingdom!!!

“The sun... I-I get it, now!” Wataru got it, but a moment too late!

Garland pointed his head toward Wataru, and shouted into the plaza!!!!

“Take this! God’s-Divine-Light Shimmering-Upon-My-Head Like-The-Morning-Sun-Rising-Above-A-Mountaintop!!!!!”

Flllllllllshshshshshsh!!!!

The reflection of the morning sunlight off of Garland’s bald head burst forth in an explosive flash of light!

“Grawaghghrgh!!!” Wataru was agonized by the light! His eyes were blinded at once, his world turned to white! The sudden flash made him lose his sense of balance! He couldn’t even tell the ground he was standing on from the sky

above his head! “Wh-What the...!?”

“How does it feel, Wataru!? I was waiting for this very moment, when the morning sun would crest above the horizon!”

“Damn! I can’t see!” Wataru was temporarily blinded!! Garland’s GDLSUMHLTMSRAAM attack had robbed Wataru of his sight!!! For real, this was not good for him!!!!

Smrashghshgragh!!!!

Unable to see, Wataru immediately smashed his invulnerable fist straight into the ground! This was a move devised in ancient China called Earthsplitter!

(*Earthsplitter — The history of *kung fu* runs far longer than we could imagine. Through the long and intimate history of the martial arts, a move was devised where the user strikes the ground with their fist, thus creating small crevices, thus splitting the Earth, hence the move being called Earthsplitter, or *chū liède* in the original Chinese. It is said that, if one has mastered this move, they can split the sea like Moses himself. However, because of its catastrophic impact to the user’s surroundings, one must first acquire a government license before learning the move. [5])

With this move, Wataru created small crevices throughout the plaza! A powerful earthquake shook the ground!

“Wh-What’s happening...!?” Garland couldn’t help but falter at the surprising attack! How could one punch tear open the very ground they stood upon!? It was unheard of! ...But Wataru’s true intention was not to attack, but to produce a different effect entirely! “...What the!?” The plaza filled with dust before Garland’s very eyes! “I see... Not bad!” Garland said, impressed!

Of course, Wataru’s intention in using Earthsplitter had not been as an attack, but to produce an impenetrable cloud of dust from the crevices in the earth!

Now, Garland could no longer find Wataru! “Damn! I can’t see through this dust...! If he buys much more time, I’m in trouble...!” It would take but thirty seconds for Wataru to regain his vision after taking a direct hit from the GDLSUMHLTMSRAAM attack! Could Wataru evade Garland long enough!?

“Herm... Ah! Where am I!?” Aria snapped awake as Wataru and Garland continued their duel! As she hurried to her feet, she discovered a bona fide hellscape before her.

The plaza that had always been a source of relaxation for the people of the town was now somehow filled with a thick cloud of dust, and cracks snaked over every surface. Through the dust, she could see a large man without a shirt standing with his arms crossed, the sun glinting off his bald head as he turned it to and fro. Aria had absolutely no clue what was going on.

“Wh-Where’s Wataru!?” Aria racked her brain in confusion as she searched for him, but the dust made it impossible to see much of anything in the plaza. *“Wataru! Wataru!”* Her heart began to pound as she called for him.

Meanwhile, Garland was searching for Wataru, just as Aria was.

“Grr... The dust is getting in my eyes...!” If Garland failed to find Wataru before the boy regained his sight, the challenger would find himself in peril all over again. He would have missed his one shot to turn this fight around. *“Impressive, Wataru. It seems it wasn’t just dumb luck that let you defeat those two Masters, at least. You have some tricks up your sleeve, too...!”* This fight would not be as easy as he had hoped. Garland flexed his muscles again and braced himself. *“I have... no other option!”* He charged into the dust cloud, determined. It may almost seem reckless, but he truly had no choice. Enveloped in the dust cloud, Garland blindly flailed his arms around him. *“Wataru! Show yourself! Where are you!?”* Garland’s arms struck nothing but dust, much to his dismay; Wataru was nowhere to be found. *“Dammit! Where are you!?”* Garland shouted into the cloud, a cold sweat beading on his head.

In response, Wataru’s voice thundered down from above. *“Up here!!!!!”*

“What!?” Garland hurriedly looked up to find Wataru falling towards him, cutting through the dust cloud at incredible speed.

“Take this!!!!!”

Zdraghrgharbdshargh!!!!

Wataru’s fist collided with Garland’s cranium.

“Graghfragh!” Garland fell to his knees. “H-How...? You should still be blind...”

“You’re right! I still can’t see a thing!”

Garland couldn’t conceal his shock. “What!? Then how did you hit me!?”

“Don’t you get it!? You were bellowing like a wounded bull in that dust cloud! It was so loud, it was easy to tell where you were, sight or no sight!!”

Wataru was right yet again! Garland, having lost sight of Wataru, had called out for him from the middle of the dust cloud. When both fighters were blinded, that single burst of decibels had decided the match!

“How could this be...!? Dammit!” His bald head shimmering in the light, Garland sulked in defeat. Tears formed at the corners of his eyes!

A few minutes later, the dust had settled, and Wataru had regained his sight!

“Wataru... I felt your power, your strength, that defeated two of the Four Masters. Thank you for fighting me!”

“Don’t sweat it, Garland! Your muscles were awesome, too!”

The two fighters clasped hands in a powerful and masculine handshake, moist with their manly sweat! A burning friendship had bloomed between the gentlemen, now that their duel was concluded!

“Now, Wataru. There is something I must tell you,” Garland said, with a suddenly serious tone!

“Shoot!”

“I have a wife and daughter. They were both kidnapped by the Demon Lord a few days ago...”

“Wh-What!?!?!?” What a shocking revelation! Just like Aria’s parents, Garland’s family had been captured by the Demon Lord, too! “Then you really fought me to—!?”

“Yes. To test if you really had what it takes to defeat the Demon Lord.”

“I get it, now!”

Apparently, Garland wasn’t just a shining meathead, but an honest family

man!

“Wataru, I know you can defeat the Demon Lord! I know I’m putting it all on your shoulders, but... Please, destroy the Demon Lord and save my family!” Garland begged, presenting Wataru with a prime view of his sparkling head!

Squinting at the morning light refracting off Garland’s head, Wataru was determined to carry the hot-blooded plea of his newfound friend with him. “You can leave it to me!!!”

Wataru was now more determined than ever to defeat the vile Demon Lord! All’s well that ends well! They lived happily ever after!!



“...You call this a happy ending!?!?!?!?” Aria interjected, jumping in between the two men! It wasn’t every day that Aria was this angry!!!

“What’s wrong, Aria!? What are you so mad about!?!?”

“What’s wrong!? Wataru, look around you!”

“Huh?” Wataru and Garland took a look around as Aria suggested! They could see how the plaza’s stone pavement was cracked all over, and the surrounding houses were all covered in dust!!!

“Oh! Crap!!!”

“Good grief. It’s going to take us a while just to clean this up...”

That was how Wataru and Garland ended up spending the rest of the day cleaning and repairing the plaza, as well as apologizing to the residents nearby!!!

And they lived happily ever after...!?

Meanwhile, the Demon Lord Deus was enjoying his strawberry parfait as usual, relaxed on his throne, when his blue slime messenger jiggled into the room.

“M-My Demon Lord...!”

“Hm? What is it, Slime? What’s the hurry...? *Nom nom...*” Deus calmly asked as he worked at his parfait with a glistening silver spoon. The parfait, by the way, was one of the goods that had been confiscated from traveling merchants on their way into the Sky Kingdom.

“Th-The fact is, My Demon Lord... Miss Binker Tell, the second of the Four Masters, has been defeated by Wataru!”

“Really...?” Deus widened his eyes in astonishment. Binker was a very powerful monster who was impervious to all physical attacks. Deus was more than a little surprised that Wataru had defeated her. Deus placed his parfait glass on his throne’s armrest and stroked his chin with a hardened expression.

“Where is Wataru now...?”

“He has just entered the Sky Kingdom!” the slime answered as he wobbled.

Deus twisted his lips into a grin. “The Sky Kingdom...? I see...”

“Wh-What about it, My Demon Lord...?”

“Slime, if I recall correctly... we have some human allies there, don’t we?”

“We do! We do! You speak of the trio!” the slime immediately confirmed with a big jiggle.

“Then let us use them... Discreetly instruct them to begin hosting the Tournament. *Hm-hm-hm...* This is going to be interesting...!” As he laughed, an evil fire raged deep within the Demon Lord’s eyes.

To be continued in the next chapter: “Wataru Joins the Fray! The Ultimate Rock Band Tournament!”

*Sources:

[4] *How to Sing: the Dripping Fists of Rhyme! Tone-Deaf? No Probs! Let’s Vibe it Up!* — Isekai Tensei Publishing

[5] *Encyclopedia of Chinese Martial Arts* — Isekai Tensei Publishing

Chapter 3: Wataru Joins the Fray! The Ultimate Rock Band Tournament!

It was high noon on the day after Wataru's battle with Garland! Wataru called Aria and Résistance to the plaza so they could resume their journey to defeat the Demon Lord!

"All right, you two! Let's get back to beating the Demon Lord!" Wataru crossed his arms with a grin! In stark contrast, Aria and Résistance both wore sad expressions!!

"No."

"Say *whaaaaaaaat*!?!?!?!?" Wataru could not believe Aria's response! "Wh- Why not!? We have to leave as soon as physically possible to save Garland's family! Yours too, Aria!!"

Résistance calmly interjected! "You have a point, Wataru. But, to be honest, it's too soon. We haven't properly recovered from our journey thus far. I think we should rest here for a few more days."

"Okay, I suppose you're right!!!"

"Exactly," Aria agreed. "Besides, a new Payblade is coming out today. We need to line up at the toy shop."

"'Payblade'!?!?!?" Wataru parroted the unfamiliar name!

"Ohohoho... Allow me to explain!" Aria boasted. "Payblades are *the* toy in the Sky Kingdom right now! They're all the rage with the kids! Payblade's latest, newest expansion comes out today, and we have to buy it before everyone else does!"

It's worth noting that Payblade was very similar to a certain toy that existed in Wataru's world!

"That's that. *Ciao*." Aria sprinted directly towards the toy shop!

“But a delay in our quest could prove catastrophic...!”

“I understand how you feel, but there’s no sense rushing back in now. Take the time to recover.”

“Hm... But it’s not easy just standing around doing nothing!”

Résistance pushed a lock of her beautiful blue hair away from her eyes!
“Then... Shall we go shopping, too?” she proposed.

The Kingdom of Sky was regarded as the most prosperous kingdom in all of the Wind Continent. The capital held a market at its entrance, and around its giant downtown area. Wataru and Résistance had gleefully turned a corner into downtown, where various shops and food stands decorated the streets. Wataru had experienced the marketplace on his first day in the city, but the downtown shopping area was easily double the size of the marketplace.

“Woah... Now this is a view!” Wataru muttered, looking left and right at the food stands displaying cuisines he had never seen before. He was in a different world, after all. Everything he saw was brand new and full of mystery.

On the other hand, most of the shopkeepers looked gloomy, most likely because they suffered from their families being kidnapped by the Demon Lord, or their businesses dying from the lack of sweets.

“It’s an expansive downtown. Quite exciting,” Résistance observed cheerfully, even as she picked up on the somewhat jaded atmosphere prone to urban districts.

“So, which shop are we going to!?”

“I would like to buy some jewelry, so I was thinking of going to Tot Hopic.”

Allow me to explain! Tot Hopic was none other than the fashion chain that Aria had aggressively crapped all over in the previous chapter!!

“Is this ‘Tot Hopic’ a jewelry store???”

“It’s a national chain that sells trinkets and such, to be precise. I like going there because they have some niche items that you don’t see in shops in the market.”

“Okay, cool!”

Wataru and Résistance weaved through the crowd with expertise, heading straight for Tot Hopic!

The duo arrived at the Sky Kingdom’s Tot Hopic location exactly ten minutes later!

“Is this the place!?”

The store was located down an alley in the downtown area, and exuded a slightly sketchy aura!

“Let’s go in.” As soon as those words left her mouth, Résistance opened the door and stepped into the store! Wataru followed directly behind!

“This place looks like crap!!!!” He shouted as soon as he entered the shop!!!!

“Quiet, Wataru! Use your inside voice!”

“Oh, my bad!” Wataru immediately apologized!

But please understand, Dear Readers, that it was only natural for him to feel that the interior of this particular establishment looked like crap! The shop was filled to the brim with some black-magic-voodoo items (a tapestry with text in an eerie font, discolored frog carcasses, etc!) that only a sinister witch would require! An upright Japanese citizen like Wataru had no business stepping foot in a place like this!

“Is-Is this really the place...???” Wataru asked nervously!

Résistance nodded! “Of course. Let’s go, the jewelry section is in the back.”

“All right...!” Wataru couldn’t help but agree with Aria’s trash-talking assessment of this store, just a little bit.

The pair walked through a tight corridor toward the back of the shop! “There it is.” The jewelry section consisted of glass display cases mostly filled with the likes of silver chains and rings!

“Those are some gnarly designs!” Wataru commented as he gazed over the

jewelry, all of which were sporting emo-criinge designs like skulls and crosses! “So, which one are you getting???”

Résistance crossed her arms before the display cases and contemplated for a moment! She was dead serious! The stakes were high! “How about... this one?” She pointed at a pendant that held a serpent wrapped around a cross!

“Okay... Why not!?”

“What’s with the face? You really don’t think this is cool, do you?” Résistance demanded, a little upset!

Wataru slowly shook his head in denial! “It’s not something I would wear, but I wouldn’t trash it! Whatever jewelry you want to wear is completely up to you! It’s none of my business!!”

Résistance suddenly looked taken aback! “...I thought you were just some apish guy, but it looks like you have some sensitivity in you, after all. I stand corrected.”

“Oh, uh...!?!?!? It’s nothing!!!” Wataru blushed a little at a compliment from a member of the opposite sex!

“People are always telling me I have bad taste. I’m kind of sensitive about it.”

“I didn’t know that! Then be confident in your taste! Nothing beats being different from everybody else!”

The merchandise sold at Tot Hopic was nothing that Wataru would have ever bought for himself! But no matter what a person’s tastes are, each one is unmistakably an expression of their individuality and their freedom! Wataru knew this at his core!

“You’re right...” Résistance flashed Wataru a gentle smile and brushed her hair out of her face! This feminine, age-appropriate expression was unbecoming of her career as an ex-Master! Wataru (as well as our Dear Readers, I’m sure!) couldn’t help but feel his heart skip a beat!

After their brief detour of the shopping variety, Wataru and Résistance walked back down the street, bathed in the golden-orange light of the setting

sun.

With her newly purchased piece of jewelry safely stored in a paper bag in her hand, Résistance quietly spoke up! “Wataru...”

“*Hm!?* What is it!?”

“Aren’t you scared to face the Demon Lord?”

“Not even one bit!” Wataru answered immediately, staring straight ahead!

“Really...”

“Were you scared when you fought the Demon Lord!?”

“Yes. I was terrified. All he had to do was glare at me with those eyes as sharp as knives. I couldn’t keep my knees from shaking,” Résistance answered truthfully, recalling the terror she felt when facing the Demon Lord. “...Why aren’t you scared, Wataru? The Demon Lord is said to be the most powerful being in this world.”

“Now we’re talking! I’m excited!”

Résistance couldn’t help but let out a chuckle. “Wataru... I think you need to understand the threat you’re facing...”

“I believe!” Wataru answered with an uncharacteristically serious expression!

“...In what?”

“In myself! I have never compromised when it comes to training!!” Wataru declared proudly and powerfully! His tone was without a shred of doubt, and was filled with his steadfast confidence!

“I see... It sounds like you’re not just muscles, either.”

“That’s right! I’m always after the win, all day, every day!!”

Wataru was a hot-blooded fighting teen! Please understand, Dear Readers, that this does not mean he was some single-minded meathead! He always cared for others, and resorted to tricky tactics if that’s what was needed to be done to defeat his opponent! That was the kind of MAN Wataru was!

“Can I ask you... one more thing, Wataru...?”

“What is it???” Wataru stared into Résistance’s eyes, concerned for her suddenly subdued tone!

Her face twisted in something akin to agony or remorse, as if she was holding back unbearable pain! “This is the same as when we were in the marketplace, but... everyone we pass on the streets appears to be hurting. It’s all because I failed to defeat the Demon Lord.” Résistance deeply exhaled. “If only I had defeated the Demon Lord when I faced him, none of them would be suffering right now... And I did much worse than simply lose to him. I betrayed mankind and served him. How can I make it up to these people?”

Wataru was moved by her comment! Come to think of it, though, it was only natural for Résistance to feel terrible guilt for the suffering of the people of the city!! My sincerest apology to any of our Dear Readers who have purchased this book expecting a rainbows-and-daisies comedy! Still, I must touch upon Résistance’s internal conflict!!

Wataru curled his right hand into a fist! “Résistance... You might have made the wrong choice back then...! If you truly want to atone for that, if you truly want to help the people of this city...!!” He slammed his fist hard against his chest!!! “You’ll have to fight with me... against the Demon Lord’s army!!!!!”

Résistance’s eyes widened! “I’m... neutral. I have to be...!”

“I know! But, still... In the end, no one can decide the path you take but you!!”

“Right... I’ll have to make a decision...!” Résistance said, quietly but firmly. She stared into Wataru’s eyes, her profile painted red by the setting sun, still burning bright far beyond the horizon!

And so concluded the warriors’ day off, that had been suddenly brought about by Aria’s want of a toy!!

It was ten in the morning, the very next day! Wataru was running down a street at 130 km/h as part of his training! Suddenly, a figure appeared before him!

“Brk!!!!!” Wataru slammed on the brakes, stopping himself just before running into the figure! “What are you doing, jumping in front of me like that!?”

The figure was a young man wearing blue jeans and a plain red T-shirt! “Are you Wataru? My name’s Rick. Please, I need your help!” the uninterestingly dressed, simple-looking young man begged Wataru!

“What are you saying, all of a sudden!?” Wataru was dumbfounded! He had no idea what was going on, but decided to hear the young man out!

“A competition was just announced out of nowhere. It’s called the ‘Wind Continent Ultimate Rock Band Tournament.’ I play guitar for this band called Dynamite Powerchord, and we signed up for the tournament, but...”

Wataru brushed aside the absurdity of rock bands existing in a fantasy world and remained silent!!

“As soon as we found out that the death metal band Hellspawn Slaughterers were in the tournament, all my band members ran for the hills! My band’s going to get disqualified! Please help me!”

The bombardment of bizarre terms and names left Wataru utterly confused!

“Um...??? Why... did your bandmates run away?!?!?” Wataru asked, energetically popping some squats to clear his head!

Rick answered with a solemn tone! “Simple. They don’t want to be killed by the Slaughterers...!”

“Wh-What!? People will die at a rock band tournament!?” That was simply too ridiculous! “Rick, tell me more!!”

“Th-Those guys... the Hellspawn Slaughterers... they kill people during their performances...”

Wataru was more than a little surprised at Rick’s answer! “W-Wait a minute...! Murder is a heinous crime in any world! How can such a dangerous band enter any tournament!?”

“I mean, murder under normal circumstances is illegal, of course. But when it happens during a live performance, it’s treated as an accident unless there’s some sort of overwhelming evidence. That’s how the Hellspawn Slaughterers get away with it every time without getting charged for their crimes. What’s worse, these kinds of graphic performances are super-popular with their

hardcore fans, and they've got a cult following."

Wataru couldn't contain his rage, mid-squat!

"Th-That's not right! Those Hellspawn Slaughterers bastards! They'll pay for killing people in their performances! Unforgivable!"

"That's where I need your help! I'm begging you, you gotta join the tournament as the lead singer for Dynamite Powerchord!"

"But I'm tone-deaf!" Wataru confessed, returning to his squat reps!

"Heh, you're being humble! I've heard the rumors. You took down Binker Tell, one of the Four Masters, with your song."

"Urm. That *is* true, but..."

Rick suddenly fell to the ground, sobbing! He groveled on his hands and knees, rubbing his face into the pavement!

"I'm literally begging you on my hands and knees! We can't let the Hellspawn Slaughterers keep acting like they own this place! I need your help!"

"All right...! I'll do it!!!!!"

There is no way that even the most astute members of our Dear Readers could have ever foreseen this story taking on a radical side mission like this that had nothing to do with defeating the Demon Lord! But people's lives were on the line! I must insist that Wataru accept this subquest!

And so, Wataru signed up for the Wind Continent Ultimate Rock Band Tournament as the vocalist for Dynamite Powerchord!!!

Immediately after their first meeting, Wataru and Rick went to a studio! While the building appeared to be a normal wooden residence by its exterior, the interior was a perfect rehearsal studio decked out with soundproof walls, mics, drums, a bass and a six-string guitar!

"...Why is there a recording studio in a fantasy world?!?!?" Wataru exploded as soon as he entered the studio!!!

Rick curiously stared at him. "What's wrong, Wataru?"

“N-Nevermind...!”

Even fantasy worlds have rehearsal studios! They do!! Of course they do!!!

“Now, Rick! When is the Wind Continent Ultimate Rock Band Tournament!?”

“A week from now. It’s not every day you hear about such a large-scale musical competition popping up out of the blue, but a lot of bands can’t afford to miss an opportunity like this.”

The clock has been set! There wasn’t much time left to goof around!

“Hm... Then we need to write a song as soon as possible!”

“Song? Don’t worry, I got you covered. We just wrote a track called ‘Sine-Cosine’s the Name.’ Let’s go with that.”

What an abhorrently horrible song title!!!

“There’s another one called ‘Trigonometry! You Can Do It Too!’”

Suddenly, Wataru could see the bizarre direction the band was skewed towards.

“I’m sorry, Rick! All I can do is rap! We need to write a rap track for the tournament!”

Rick looked back at Wataru, confused! “Rap? Never heard of it... But if that’s what you’ll need, that’s what we’ll do.”

“Thanks, Rick! And we need more members in the band! One guitar and vocals won’t cut it!”

“You got a point there. Anyone in mind?”

“Leave it to me!” Wataru said! He kicked down the door and stormed out of the studio!

It was just about eleven o’clock when Wataru gleefully returned to the studio!

“Here’s our band!” He shouted as he kicked down the just-repaired door, dragging two people into the building by their necks!

“Noooooooooooo! I don’t want to be in a band contest!! Let me

goooooooooooo!! I want to go hooooooooome!!”

“Wataru, what’s going on!? I don’t understand! Also, you’re choking me!”

Of course, the two new bandmates Wataru had dragged to the studio were the kicking and crying Aria and the utterly dumbfounded Résistance!

“H-Hey... Are they... okay?” Rick couldn’t help but be concerned!

“They’re fine!”

“I don’t want toooooo!! I’m supposed to be the frail heroine!! This isn’t in my job description!!”

“I don’t want this, either!”

Aria and Résistance continued to be Negative Nancys, but we can’t be bothered with this! The tournament was in a week!

“Aria! Résistance! I need your help! Lend us your strength!!” Wataru begged like he’d never begged before! Like his very own life was on the line!!

“O-Okay, if you insist that much... Besides, we could cheer up the people of this country with the power of music...” Résistance reluctantly agreed, moved either by Wataru’s passion or her guilt!

Aria, however, would not succumb so easily!

“Please, Aria!”

“No.”

“I’ll buy you all of the new Payblades!!”

“All right, I’ll do it.” Aria joined the band, just like that!

But one important question remained!

“I have to ask you guys... Can either of you play instruments?” Rick raised an eyebrow!

This, of course, was the looming question! What was the point of going through all that to have them join the band if they could not play any instruments!?

Résistance proudly answered! “Don’t worry about me. I played around with a

bass guitar for like a year when I was fourteen. I thought it was cool.”

“All right, it sounds like you got the basics down.” Rick said, relieved!

“There was a time in my life when I dipped my toes in drums!” Aria proclaimed with a smile!

“Really!?!?!?” Wataru was surprised to hear about that side of her!

“I had to kick them really hard.”

“‘Dipping your toe’ doesn’t mean what you think it does, Aria.” Rick pointed out.

Who but Aria, our frail series heroine, could show such incredibly psychopathic tendencies!? How many women in this vast fantasy world could claim to have physically shoved their toes into drums!?

“We just don’t have much time until the tournament. Let’s start practicing!” Rick loudly declared!

The quartet of Wataru, Rick, Aria, and Résistance were now the midwives at the birth of the brand-new Dynamite Powerchord!!!

From that moment on, the band poured their blood, sweat, and tears into rehearsing for the tournament!!! Wataru and Rick dedicated themselves to writing a fresh rap track to defeat the heinous death metal band Hellspawn Slaughterers! Résistance gradually rediscovered her talent for playing the bass guitar! Aria worked hard at the drums to keep up with Résistance! Aria suddenly started kicking the drum bare-footed, rambling things like “Maybe this time my toe won’t bleed!!” The next day, Aria started complaining that “I really don’t know how this could have happened, my toe hurts!!!”

Through horrible trials and tribulations, there was an unbreakable bond forming between the bandmates. Although it may seem like they had completely forgotten about their goal to defeat the Demon Lord... they kept rehearsing for the rock band tournament, nonetheless!!!

A week had passed, and the day of the Wind Continent Ultimate Rock Band

Tournament had arrived! Wataru's party of four arrived at the mega-gigantic concert venue, Nadisom Square Garden!!

As they stood outside the venue, Rick looked up solemnly at the building and whispered to himself, "We're here... We're finally here...!"

"We are..." Résistance said, "But don't worry. After our rehearsals, we can take down even the Hellspawn Slaughterers."

"She's right, Rick!" shouted Aria. "We're the next Wind Continent Ultimate Rock Band!"

"Résistance, Aria... You're right! Let's do this!"

Aria and Résistance had really gotten into this band thing along the way!

"All right! Let's go in!!!" Wataru started toward the entrance, primed to drop mics to the top!

A shady trio suddenly emerged before him, blocking their way!

"Y-You're...!" Rick was in shock upon seeing who they were!

"Well, well, well... If it isn't little Ricky. You still playing for that crummy little band... what was it, 'Dyna-butt Pooperchord'?"

"*Grehheheh!* And here I was, thinking that all the other bands would be a no-show!"

"Whatever... You guys don't have a chance anyway..."

The three men spitting these insults were none other than the members of the Hellspawn Slaughterers, the terrifying death metal band!!! They each wore a black leather jacket decorated with numerous steel spikes that looked like it would hurt a lot if someone were to run into them! Their faces were all covered with skull-patterned face paint, and their hairstyles were wild and varied; one wore a Mohawk, another pigtails, and the third was shaved completely bald! In short, they were dangerous people!!!

"You bastards... I've heard enough...!" Enraged, Rick stepped forward to confront the Hellspawn Slaughterers!

Wataru threw his arm out across Rick's chest to stop him!! "Don't do it,

Rick!!!!!"

"Why not!? Why are you holding me back!?"

"We're here for the Wind Continent Ultimate Rock Band Tournament! Win or lose, this battle should be fought with music! Am I wrong!?"

"N-No, you're right..." Rick admitted through clenched teeth, his hands balled into fists!

The pigtailed member of the Hellspawn Slaughterers looked Wataru up and down! "*Gweheheh*! You're the Wataru we've been hearing so much about...! Stupidly tall, like they've been saying!"

"Hm!? You know who I am!?"

The portly man with a shaved head chimed in. "Oh yeah, we know *you*... In any case, there's no way we're not winning this tournament...! Listen and weep, Wataru...!"

With that insidious comment, the members of Hellspawn Slaughterers guffawed their way into the venue! Wataru and Rick glared at them as they left!!

"Wataru... I want to win...! I want to beat those bastards...!"

"Let's do it! We can win this!"

With renewed determination, the band stepped into the venue...!

Nadisom Square Garden was already packed to the rafters! There was barely any room to stand in the audience, and every seat was filled!

"Wow, Rick! How many people are out there!?"

"Probably... five thousand, give or take."

Wataru and Rick were peeking out from behind the curtains as they made preparations for their performance!

"I can't believe I'm about to play in front of all those people... I'm getting the jitters!"

"It's all right, Rick! Deep breaths!"

A man of around 60 appeared on the glimmering stage! He was well put-together, wearing a black suit and slicked-back hair! He took the mic, and spoke with a sparkling smile!

“Ladies and gentlemen! Welcome to the Wind Continent Ultimate Rock Band Concert! I am your host, Joseph Yokozawa! Are you ready to rock!?” The crowd went absolutely wild! They were already hyped to the max! “Allow me to introduce our contestants! While we had ten groups scheduled to perform tonight, eight of the bands were a no-show!” It went without saying that all of them were terrified of facing Hellspawn Slaughterers! “So, you’ll only be hearing from two bands tonight. The up-and-coming death metal band Hellspawn Slaughterers, and the almost brand-new Dynamite Powerchord!” The crowd responded with uproarious cheers and applause! “Are you ready? Let the rocking begin! Going first are the Hellspawn Slaughterers, a death metal trio with a sound to die for!!! Here they are!”

Joseph Yokozawa waved a beckoning hand offstage, and the Hellspawn Slaughterers ran on!

“Oh my God!!!”

“I love you, Hellspawn Slaughterers!!!”

Surprisingly, many of the Hellspawn Slaughterers’ fans were female! The vocalist with his Mohawk and eerie face paint gripped the mic! “Listen up, bitches!!!! You ready to die!?!?!?!?”

“Oh, yeah!”

“I love it!”

The audience cheered right back!

“Dammit, they’re killing it out there...!” Rick bit his lip in frustration!

“Don’t worry, we’ll be great!” Wataru said encouragingly!

“All right, bitches!”

At the vocalist’s cue, the guitarist and drummer started playing!!! An explosive cacophony filled the venue!! The eccentric bassline of the Hellspawn Slaughterers’ guitar and drums created an aggressive, *avant garde* sound that

electrified those who heard it!

“Grr... I hate to admit it, but they got real sound...!” Not even Rick could help but recognize the talent that the Hellspawn Slaughterers were displaying!!

As the venue grew more pumped by the second... The vocalist finally opened his mouth and began to sing!!!

"Hhhrrrrrrrrwwwwwaaaaaaaahhhhhh!!!!!!!!!!"

“Wh-What is that voice!?!?!?” Wataru was astounded!

“That’s the Death Growl*, the Hellspawn Slaughterers’ signature sound!!”

“Death Growl... How can a human voice produce that...!?”

The venue was filled with a demonic wail, that screeching roar known as the Death Growl!

(*Death Growl — A vocal technique used in musical genres such as *death metal* and *screamo*. The singer intentionally utilizes vocal fry to create a guttural growl that expresses visceral anger or hatred. However, the Death Growl requires very specialized techniques and requires practice. The untrained singer can easily damage their throat or vocal cords by attempting this. Train with caution. [6]) As the Death Growl rolled through the venue, the hyped-up audience members began headbanging along with the beat! A special kind of unity engulfed the audience! Without warning, a purple magic circle over 50 meters wide appeared in the air over the audience!

“Wh-What is that!?” Wataru was astounded, once again!

"I-I don't even know!" Rick scrunched his face in horror!

Résistance was suddenly standing beside them before either of them noticed her approach. “There’s no mistake... They’re trying to summon an evil spirit!”

“Résistance!?”

“S-Summon an evil spirit!? They can do that!?”

Résistance nodded! “Yes... It’s difficult to believe, but that singer’s Death Growl is resonating at a special frequency that allows him to communicate with evil spirits...!”

Naturally, the ex-Master Résistance would have expert knowledge on evil spirits!

“S-So... If this keeps up, evil spirits are going to respond to that Death Growl and materialize here!?!?!?”

“That’s right.”

“Dammit!!! Who goes and summons evil spirits during a concert!?!?!?!?” Wataru snapped, like any reasonable person would!!

He was right! Summoning evil spirits during a concert... was totally not cool!

“H-How can they do that, anyway!?” Rick asked!

Résistance answered him calmly. “I’ve heard of it in rumor that some humans worship the Demon Lord. Perhaps they’re that sort of group.”

“How could that be...!? They’re human! How can they agree with the Demon Lord’s plan to destroy humanity!? And help him through the power of song, even!!” Wataru couldn’t believe his ears!

He could understand how Résistance served the Demon Lord because she owed a life debt! But he couldn’t possibly imagine how the members of the Hellspawn Slaughterers could work towards the Demon Lord’s goal and ideals when they didn’t owe him anything!

“This is bad, Wataru! We have to stop them!” Beads of cold sweat were running down Rick’s face!

But they were too late! Bizarre metamorphoses were taking place in the cramped audience!

“Ahhhhhh!!! I’m turning purple!!!”

“Errrrghh!!! Mah head! Ah’m growin’ horns!!!”

The floor of the venue was turning into a hellscape! At this rate, everyone in the audience would become possessed by the evil spirits!!!

“We don’t have time! *Sckrpnch!!!*” Wataru rushed the stage and punched the three performers in one swing, his fist causing a thunderous *crack!* as it broke the sound barrier!!! The three Hellspawn Slaughterers fell flat on their backs!!

The fallen vocalist faintly groaned in agony. “I-I’m sorry, my Demon Lord... We failed you...”

“They were tied to the Demon Lord, after all...!!” Wataru had defeated the Hellspawn Slaughterers, but the magic circle remained above the audience! “It’s not going away...!? Wh-What are we supposed to do!?!?!?” Wataru was in dire straits! Still, Dear Readers, he hadn’t given up! “We have to do it...! Aria! Rick! Résistance!” He immediately called his bandmates onto the stage!!

“You can count on me!”

“This is our time to shine!”

“Finally.”

They walked onto the stage with enthusiasm and swiftly set up their instruments!

“Wataru! I’m ready!” Aria called from behind the drums!

“Me too!”

“Me three!”

Rick and Résistance chimed in, holding their six-string and bass guitar, respectively.

“All right! We’re ready! Let’s let the audience hear our dripping track to wash away the evil spirits!!!”

“That’s it, Wataru! What a great idea!” Aria complimented Wataru, drumsticks in hand!

She hadn’t forgotten her job as the heroine, after all!

“Are we really going to be able to get rid of these evil spirits this way?” Rick asked nervously!

Résistance answered him boldly! “If they can summon evil spirits using their voices with the Death Growl, the opposite must be true! With Wataru’s hot-blooded voice, we can push these evil spirits out of the people in the audience... I think!” She wasn’t sure it would work, but it makes sense!!

“Let’s do it!”

With a mic in hand, Wataru began singing with a demonic expression!

Now, Dear Readers, I've included the lyrics below so you can sing along!!!!

"Dynamite Rap"

Lyrics: Wataru Ito — Music: Rick

(20 sec. intro)

Hey, party people, is it getting hot in here?

We're gonna blow the roof offa this place now, ya hear?

Everybody listen up, c'mon, lend me your ear

If you're hearin' my raw lyrics put your hands in the air!

(Bass solo — Résistance)

"Hellspawn Slaughterers"?

More like "Good Music Boycotters"

We're like a blast of fresh water

Now try to keep up with this beat, clap your hands in the air!

(Guitar solo — Rick)

Wataru Ito's here, and I'm rockin' the mic

Stopped a truck with my hands like a little trike

Crossin' worlds baby, and I'm ready to strike

It's all in the rhymes man, we know what you like

Every other band you've ever heard's gonna be leavin' you bored

Check out the new hotness, we're Dynamite Powerchord!

What's more fun than facing mortal danger?

Hot-blooded to the max, *Go! Go! Wataru Ranger!*

Blastin' through to the top we're the number one band!

Yeah. That's right. Uh-huh.

(Drum solo brought to an early end as Aria kicks through her drum with her bare feet)

Wataru powered through “Dynamite Rap,” the fresh track they had prepared for the tournament!! Rick and Résistance accompanied his rap with some hot-blooded chords! Aria continued beating a powerful rhythm, further smashing up the broken remnants of her drums!

“We out!!!” Wataru shouted, as exhausted as if he had emerged from a battle that had lasted a hundred years!

Aria looked worse for wear, too, after destroying the drum set with her bare feet for some reason! In fact, one of the pieces of the drum set had flown up and stabbed her in her forehead! Bright red blood gushed out of her face like a raging flood! ...But don't you worry about her, Dear Readers! She can cast healing magic, remember?

Something began to happen down in the audience!

“I-I'm... Turning back to normal!”

“M-Me too!”

“Oh, yeah!!!”

The evil spirits that had possessed the audience began to vanish, one after another! Before they knew it, the giant magic circle hovering over the people had dissipated!!!

“You did it, Wataru!” cheered Aria!

“I sure did!!!” The word ‘impossible’ was not listed in the dictionary of Wataru, the hot-blooded fighting teen!!! His hot-blooded rhymes had miraculously exorcized the evil spirits from the cheering crowd!!!

Two days later, the band had reconvened in the rehearsal studio!

“I’m sorry, Rick... I can’t believe they didn’t declare a winner for the Ultimate Rock Band Tournament...” Aria said consolingly!

When all was said and done that day, the Wind Continent Ultimate Rock Band Tournament had been shut down by the authorities! No winners were announced, and no plans were made for future tournaments!

Still, Rick smiled! “It’s all right, Aria. After everything that’s happened, the tournament doesn’t matter all that much.” He took a moment to pause! “I’m just happy that the four of us gave a performance of a lifetime out there! The power of our song chased those evil spirits away! What other band in the whole Wind Continent can say that!?”

“Indeed,” Résistance said with a smile.

“And it’s all thanks to you, Wataru...!” Rick said, turning to Wataru!

But Wataru didn’t respond! He stood completely still, his head bowed!

“What’s wrong, Wataru...?”

Tears were pouring down Wataru’s cheeks! That’s right!! Wataru! Was!! Crying!!!

“W-Wataru...!”

“Rick... I’m so glad...! I’m happy that... we could be in a band together!!!” Wataru spoke through his tears!

Rick, Aria, and Résistance turned their gazes on him with kindness!

“Wataru... Aria... Résistance... Thank you so much for all of your help.”

“Well, Rick... What are you going to do, now?” Aria asked!

Rick stared off into the distance, eyes brimming with hope! “Let’s see... I can’t rely on you guys forever. I’ll gather up the old members and reunite the OG Dynamite Powerchord.”

“All right!!! You can do it!!!”

“You got this!”

“If you ever need a cool bassist to come and save the day again... You can always call me.”

Wataru, Aria, and Résistance gave Rick their heartfelt support!

As suddenly as they'd formed, the new Dynamite Powerchord disbanded...!!!

Meanwhile, in the Demon Lord's castle...

Having received the report that the Hellspawn Slaughterers had been defeated, the Demon Lord Deus was uncharacteristically shaken, too disturbed to even finish his cream puff.

"Curses! We went through all that paperwork to host the Wind Continent Ultimate Rock Band Tournament...!" Deus wandered around the room holding his half-eaten cream puff in his hand. With each step, a *clip* or *clop* echoed through the throne room. His slime messenger could only huddle before the throne, unsure of what to do with his jiggly body. "I gave those Hellspawn Slaughterers the chance they had been begging for... *Hmph*. Humans." Deus continued mumbling to himself as he paced in erratic circles around the room.

Clip, clop, clip, clop, clip, clop...

The slime timidly spoke up. "M-My Demon Lord... Forgive me, but I fail to see the urgency. The Hellspawn Slaughterers are mere humans. I don't find anything notable in their defeat against Wataru."

Deus stopped dead in his tracks and turned to his subordinate, staring down the gelatinous existence before him. "...My apologies. I momentarily lost my composure," the Demon Lord said calmly, before flourishing his crisp, white coat and returning to the throne. He sat down heavily and returned to eating the cream puff. "*Nom...* Continue."

"Y-Yes, My Demon Lord! Another matter to report... is that the other human traveling with Wataru, Aria, is also a dangerous girl!"

"A girl...? How is she dangerous?"

"The girl appears to be quite ordinary, virtuous, even! But she's got some real issues!"

"Issues...?" Deus had no idea what the Slime was talking about. "...Be more specific."

“Blood runs down her face, and she puts her foot through drums!”

“...Huh?” Deus was even more lost. Who could have blamed him? What human would do such things, much less a frail-looking girl? Still, Deus concluded that, since this was coming from his trusty slime messenger, it must be true. “Oof... Well, no matter. We still have plenty of time... Two of the Four Masters still remain. They will defeat Wataru for me...!” He tossed the remainder of his cream puff into the air, catching it deftly in his mouth and swallowing it in a single gulp.

To be continued in the next chapter: “Wataru VS the Third Master! The High-Steaks Cook-off!!!”

*Sources:

[6] *The Big Book of Death Growling For Little Thrashers* — Isekai Tensei Publishing

Chapter 4: Wataru VS the Third Master! The High-Steaks Cook-off!!!

Time skip to six AM the next morning, which is still plenty early!! Wataru was thinking back on the events of the Ultimate Rock Band Tournament while doing push-ups in a room filled with workout equipment!!

“The Hellspawn Slaughterers... They were humans, but they worshiped the Demon Lord with all their hearts! It’s scary how charismatic the Demon Lord is!” Wataru switched to squats! He continued talking to himself even as he knocked out 10 squats a second! “Seeing that the Demon Lord has his minions in the Sky Kingdom, too, there’s not much time to lose! We have to take down the Demon Lord, fast...! All right, let’s go!!” Wataru jumped out of the room!

He immediately dragged Aria and Résistance out of bed, and the trio departed from the Sky Kingdom with utmost enthusiasm!

“Oh, right! The Demon Lord! I forgot all about him! Ha ha ha ha!” Aria heartily laughed after two hours of walking! Our Dear Readers must be in complete astonishment that our main heroine had completely forgotten about her kidnapped parents! Aria was getting more and more unpredictable with every chapter!

Three hours had passed since they left the Sky Kingdom, and the forest opened up to a vast wasteland!

“Woah... Now that’s a change in scenery...!” Wataru commented!

“Sure is...” Aria agreed! “I’ve never come this far!”

Résistance turned to them with a serious expression! “Listen up, you two. We still have a long journey ahead to the Demon Lord’s castle, not to mention that there are two more Masters. We have to keep our guard up.”

“Yeah!!!” Wataru agreed, his face contorted like a *Nio*!

“Résistance, can’t you at least tell us what powers the other two Masters

have?” Aria asked! “You were one of them, so you have to know that much.”

Résistance shook her head! “Like I’ve said before, I’m not completely on your side. Just neutral. My moral code prohibits me from helping you like that. Besides...”

“Besides... what?” Aria prodded!

“I don’t know the other two’s powers.”

Wataru and Aria couldn’t conceal their shock!

“R-Résistance... Did the other Masters bully you!?” Aria asked, tears in her eyes!

Wataru shook with anger! “You poor, poor thing...! They never let you play in their Four Master games, did they!? That’s why you don’t know their powers!!”

“No, I wasn’t! No! No!” Résistance vehemently denied it, blushing slightly.

“It’s all right, Résistance. You don’t have to hide it from us! We all have painful memories!”

“Aria, stop! Stop being so serious about it! I wasn’t bullied or anything; the other two have never revealed their true forms.”

Wataru frowned! ““Never revealed their true forms’...!?!?!? What does that mean!?!?!?”

“The remaining two Masters can both change their appearances with magic. They always kept their true forms a secret, and concealed their powers from the other Masters. Whenever there was a Four Master meeting or karaoke party, they showed up as different monsters each time.”

“Karaoke party...?” Aria repeated, intrigued! Unfortunately for her, that has nothing to do with the main story! We certainly don’t have enough pages to allow ourselves to be sidetracked by such musical frivolity!

“Okay! It just means they kept their secrets hidden, right!?!?” Wataru summarized!

“That’s the gist of it. So, I don’t know their powers, or even what species they are.”

“Keeping your cards close to your chest is one of the basics of fighting!!!”

Wataru was right! The most important aspect in combat was not measurable strength, but information! The difference between knowing and not knowing what martial arts one’s opponent is using and what they’re capable of can completely turn one’s chances of winning a fight around! Therefore, concealing the true extent of one’s power is a cardinal rule—one that the remaining two Masters strictly abided by!

Aria rubbed her empty stomach! “Is anyone else hungry...?” she muttered! In truth, the trio had not stopped to eat anything during their three-hour journey out of the Sky Kingdom!

“I sure am!!!” bellowed Wataru! “But, Aria, there’s no way we’re going to find a place to eat out here in this wasteland—”

“Look, a restaurant!” Aria interrupted, pointing at a large restaurant.

“H-How!?!?”

Incredibly, there was a charming wooden establishment right there that none of them had noticed until now! It was the sort of place that would typically get an average of four and a half stars on review sites!

Résistance stared at the building. “That’s suspiciously convenient... Oh, well. I’m starving, too. Let’s take a break.”

“Then it’s settled!!!”

The trio put on some real speed and hustled over to the restaurant!

They walked into the restaurant through the wooden front door. The interior was conservatively and tastefully decorated, but there were no other patrons to be found!

“Excuse me!” Aria called out!

A man somewhere in his fifties came out through the door to the back of the restaurant, rushing like a whirlwind at a speed of 20 km/h! He appeared to be the chef.

“Yes, yes. Welcome,” he said with a friendly smile. “Right this way, please!”

May I take your order?”

As the party sat at a table, the chef brought over a set of menus.

“What will you have, Wataru?” Aria asked.

“I can’t read!!!!!!!!!!!!!!”

Once again, allow me to explain that Wataru could not read the language of this world! *Then how can he understand their language when it’s spoken?* I hear you ask!! We don’t have time to go into that, Dear Readers!!! You may read this book from cover to cover a hundred times over (please do) and this mystery will never be solved!!!!

“I’m good with anything,” Résistance offered.

“I’ll take whatever!” Wataru joined in.

“Three sandwiches, please,” Aria decided for them! How kind of her!

“Coming right up.” The chef returned into the kitchen.

A few minutes passed! The trio were playing with Aria’s Payblades, which she had brought with her from the Sky Kingdom, when the chef brought out the sandwiches on a large platter!

“Three sandwiches.”

“Whoa, those look good!” Wataru said admiringly, starting to put away his Payblade!

Aria reached out to stop him! “Hold on, Wataru! Our match isn’t over! My *Hyper Dragoon Shining Cerberus R* can still spin!”

Résistance scoffed! “Hmph! You’re no match for my *Burning Drive M (Final Battle of Darkness Edition)*!”

Aria and Résistance each showed off their Payblades with the simple enthusiasm of schoolchildren comparing some rocks they found.

Wataru ignored them and raised his hands to put them together in the Japanese expression of thanks before eating. “Thank you for this meal!!!!!!”

Boooooooooooooooooommmmm!!!!!!

There was a thunderous noise as Wataru's steel-hard hands generated a shockwave that blasted into the ears of everyone in the restaurant!



“It got really quiet in here all of a sudden,” Aria said, before noticing the spray of blood coming from her ears! “...Oh, my eardrums blew out.” She immediately understood what had happened and healed her eardrums with magic! “Come on, Wataru! Don’t do stuff like that without warning us first!”

“Oh, my bad!!”

Wataru’s overwhelming gratitude for his daily bread had erupted in a sonic boom when he put his hands together!!! Now, he took one of the sandwiches and took a big manly bite!

Chrghghooooomppppp!!!!

“How do you like it, Wataru?” Aria asked as she stuffed her Payblade into her pocket!

What did Wataru have to say about it!?!? Let us find out, Dear Readers!!

“...Yeah! This sandwich is totally delic-
bragharalghlagghrghakgjhgaklragh!!!!!!!!!!!!”

H-How could this be!? Wataru suddenly began foaming at the mouth and fell to the floor! I can hear the collective *GASP* of our Dear Readers!!! Aria and Résistance were startled, too!

“A-Are you all right, Wataru!? Hey!” Résistance shook the fallen Wataru, but he didn’t respond!

The chef burst into laughter! “Mwahahahaha! You fell right into my trap!”

Résistance jumped out of her seat! “Y-You don’t really work here, do you!?” She put a hand on the sword at her hip!

“Correct! My real identity is... Cyclops John, third of the Four Masters!” His face distorted like a rapidly deflating balloon!

“M-Magic...!” Aria shouted in the shock of her realization!

That’s right. He had been disguising his appearance and age by magic!

“I am no human! I am a cyclops, a species of one-eyed monsters!” Cyclops John revealed his true face! As his name suggested, it was a monstrous form with one large eye! It was terrifying how the lone eyeball moved around!

Cyclops John had blue skin and a barrel chest covered in a white apron and chef's hat!

"Cyclops John... I've heard his name, but I never expected him to be a cyclops... What a masterful disguise...!" Beads of cold sweat dripped down the face of Résistance, the ex-Master! For the sake of our protagonists, she really should have made the connection before this point!

"Heh heh heh... I've heard about you, Résistance. That Wataru kid kicked your ass, so you betrayed the Demon Lord."

"Hmph! I haven't betrayed anyone! I'm strictly neutral!"

Cyclops John scoffed! "We'll see about that! But the deed is already done. I expected you to come this way, and placed my brilliant Restaurant Trap. I poisoned the sandwich Wataru just ate with enough to kill a grown man in seconds."

"Did you really!?!?!?" Wataru asked!

"Indeed, I did," Cyclops John gloated.

"By the way, Cyclops John. Do you call yourself 'Cyclops John,' or is that what everyone else calls you?"

"'Cyclo' is my first name and 'Psjohn' is my last name. I'm Cyclo Psjohn."

"That's amazing!! Nice to meet you!!!" Wataru held out his hand to shake.

"Likewise!" Cyclo Psjohn reached out to shake hands, then did a double take. "...What!? How are you still alive!?"

Wataru had recovered without anyone noticing!

"Heh, I've got Supersonic Digestion! Your little poison didn't even give me a stomachache!!"

Allow me to explain! Supersonic Digestion is a totally legitimate martial arts move!

(*Supersonic Digestion — A move invented by a certain karate fighter in the early *Edo* era. The standards for food quality were much lower back then, and fatal food poisoning was not a rare occurrence. This move strengthens the

user's stomach acid to the point of digesting any food (and toxic materials) in an instant. Learning this move requires an incredibly durable stomach lining. It isn't for everyone [7].) Wataru held up his fists! "All right, Psjohn! You're gonna get what you deserve!"

Psjohn cried out in protest! "W-Wait, Wataru! I really am a chef, I can't fight!"

"What!? Then how are you one of the Four Masters!?"

"I used to be the head chef of the Demon Lord's castle! Since the Demon Lord suffers from diabetes, I worked hard to provide him with a diabetes-friendly diet! One day, he appointed me one of the Four Masters!"

"You just got the job through your connections!" Résistance shouted!

"So if we're going to do battle, it should be a chefs' battle! Fight me in a cookoff instead!" Psjohn declared!

"That's fine by me!!" Wataru agreed instantly!

"How is that fine!?" Aria was astounded!!!

Remember, Dear Readers, as a hot-blooded hardcore Japanese teen, Wataru could never turn his back on a challenge!

"But how do we do a cookoff???"

"We have the perfect judge right here," Psjohn said, pointing at Résistance!

"Huh? Me!?"

"She is an ex-Master, but she's declared herself neutral now! I'm sure her judgment of our cookoff will be fair and square!"

"That makes sense!" It made complete sense to Wataru!

"Good, then let us begin!" Psjohn declared!

"Why me...?" Résistance sighed, exhausted.

Having decided through completely sound reasoning to settle their battle with a cookoff, Wataru, Psjohn, Aria, and Résistance moved to the restaurant's kitchen! Wataru had expected to see an archaic kitchen, but he was greeted by a stainless steel sink and large stovetop! Wataru could probably work his way

around these appliances!

“No fancy rules,” Psjohn explained. “Make any dish you want, using the food in the kitchen.”

“All right!!!” Wataru accepted!

“You can do it, Wataru!” Aria didn’t forget to cheer him on!

“Let the cookoff begin!”

Wataru gave a quick glance at the foods laid out on a table, and turned to Aria!

“Aria! I have no knowledge about the food of this world! Tell me what these ingredients are!!”

“Okay!”

“Well, first off... What’s this blue ball, about the size of a baby’s head???”

“Dragon egg!”

“This gross blob of meat!?”

“Roasted Orc arm!”

“What about this brown and lanky fruit!?”

“Wind Lemon, the main produce of this region!”

“...They all sound disgusting!!!” Wataru shouted in dismay!

It was terrifying how foreign every single one of these foods seemed to Wataru! He couldn’t even imagine how each of them would taste! Wataru wondered if this was what culture shock felt like!! But then, Wataru found something he recognized!

“Is-Is that... white rice!?”

Indeed! In the corner of the table stacked full with bizarre foods, Wataru found a bowl of freshly cooked white rice!

“Oh, that bowl of rice? Not a lot of people eat it in the Sky Kingdom, but I hear that it’s the main source of food in some continents.”

“Really!!”

A ray of light in the darkness! What an absolute stroke of luck! With that bowl of white rice that shone bright like diamonds, Wataru had a chance!

“So, Wataru. What are you going to make?”

“Mm. I’m going to make *chahan* with this bowl of rice!!”

Aria wasn’t familiar with that word! “*Chahan*...? What kind of food is that?”

“You’ll see!”

With reckless abandon, Wataru cracked the blue egg into an empty bowl! To his relief, the yolk was yellow, just like a chicken’s egg! While Wataru still didn’t know what a dragon egg would taste like, Résistance would be the one eating the dish, so he didn’t really care!

“Grrrrrrgaghghaghralragh!!!!!”

Wataru put all of his might into stirring the egg using a pair of chopsticks at supersonic speed, far exceeding the performance of any electric mixer. Once the egg was sufficiently scrambled, he oiled a frying pan and put it on the stove before tossing the rice in it! The scent of savory fried rice filled the kitchen!

“All right! Now we’re talking!” Wataru deftly maneuvered the pan to evenly stir-fry the rice before pouring in the scrambled dragon egg! So far, so good! But now, a huge obstacle revealed itself before Chef Wataru!!! “Oh!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Crap!!!!!!!!!!!!!!” Wataru nearly shouted the roof off!!!!!!

“What’s wrong, Wataru?” Aria was absolutely disgusted by the fact that Wataru screamed about excrement in the middle of a cookoff!

“Damn!!!!!!!!!!!!!! There’s not enough heat!!!!!!!!!!!!!!”

Indeed! There was not enough heat! Allow me to explain to those among our Dear Readers who are not avid cooks. *Chahan*, or stir-fried rice, relies on rapidly cooking the ingredients on high heat! However, the amenities of this restaurant were far inferior to those in a professional Japanese kitchen. The stovetop just wasn’t hot enough!!! At this rate, the rice would become sticky and the *chahan* would lack that iconic “flakiness.” Even Musashi Miyamoto, the famous dual-wielding historical swordsman has been quoted as saying “If your *chahan* don’t flake, you made a mistake!” ...I think!

Wataru was in mortal danger! “Rrrrrragggghhhh! I have no other choice!”

Wataru couldn’t use magic, either! He had no way of using some sort of fire spell to heat his rice! However...! One didn’t have to be a magic user to produce extra heat!!! The man standing in this kitchen right then was capable of producing heat much more powerful than any fire spell!!!!

“Rbb!!!!” Wataru shouted, and grabbed the edge of the pan with his left hand!

“W-Wataru!?” Aria was shaken!! What human would grab a burning-hot pan with their bare hand!?!? Never try this at home, kids!!

“If there isn’t enough heat... I’ll have to make more!!!!”

Behold! Wataru’s left hand appeared to be motionless upon first glance, but if one were to imagine that one’s mind’s eye zoomed in closely on his hand—closer... closer than that... that’s a little too close! Back up! There! That’s close enough!—one could discern through careful observation that it was actually vibrating incredibly rapidly! This move was none other than Hot-Blooded Vibration*, a skill from the Russian fighting style, Systema!!!

(*Hot-Blooded Vibration — A Systema move in which the user vibrates their hand at supersonic speeds to assault their opponent with incredible friction. Legends tell that the fighting masters of arctic Russia warmed their bodies with this move to survive the winters. It goes without saying that this is the first move any student of Systema learns in Russia. [8]) “All right!!! Here’s my *chahan*!!!”

Just as Wataru plated his *chahan*, Psjohn called out from across the kitchen! “You finished cooking, Wataru!? My dish has just been plated, too! Let’s see which of us will end up on the chopping block!”

Wataru and Psjohn each brought their dish to the table where Résistance was waiting! The fateful tasting was about to commence!!!

“Mine first.” Psjohn placed his plate before Résistance! The steam of the dish and the enticing scent of melted butter filled the air!

“Ooh, this looks good...” Résistance couldn’t help but lick her chops!!

“An A5 top-cut cerberus steak, seasoned only with butter and a sprinkle of rock salt so as to not overwhelm the luxurious taste of the meat. This perfectly curated culinary experience is my masterpiece, with every detail from the heat to seasoning carried out with exacting detail!” Psjohn proudly rattled on!

Résistance took her fork and knife, and carefully cut a piece off of the steak! Meat juice poured out of the cut! Anyone who saw it couldn't help but wish to swim in a pool full of that meat juice!!

“Here goes...” Résistance slowly raised the bite-size cut of steak to her mouth! As soon as her lips closed around the steak, Résistance fell speechless!! Then...!!!

Rrrrrrrrrriiiipppppppp!!!!

How could this be!? Résistance's clothes were torn to shreds by the sheer deliciousness of this one bite of steak!!!

“Hey! Résistance's clothes are all torn up!! We can see her midriff now!!!” shouted Wataru!

“Don't worry, Wataru! Even though her clothes were torn, the important parts are covered!”

Indeed! Résistance's breasts were covered by her armor. Even though the clothes she wore under it had shredded themselves, nothing had been uncovered that may affect the rating of this book! This is a family-friendly light novel!

“Th-This steak... is amazing! The meat juice strikes my mouth like lightning at every chew! Thanks to the simple seasoning, the layered flavor of the meat directly hits my taste buds!” Résistance was thoroughly impressed!

Psjohn let out a victorious chuckle!!! “*Ckckck...* I have a chef's and nutritionist's license here, in the Wind Continent... No one stands a chance against me when it comes to cooking delicious yet healthy dishes! You were doomed to lose this cookoff from the start, Wataru!”

Still, Wataru did not give up! “The cookoff isn't over, yet! Résistance! Try my *chahan*!” He placed the steaming plate of *chahan* before Résistance!

“All right. I’ve never had this *chahan* before... But here goes.” Résistance picked up a spoon and took a bite of Wataru’s *chahan*!

What say Résistance!?!?!?

“...It’s okay.”

“...Whaaat!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?” Wataru was utterly dumbfounded!

Who could have expected the protagonist to lose like this! I can practically hear your audible gasps, Dear Readers!!!

“I mean, it’s good... But it doesn’t come close to Psjohn’s steak. He’s an officially licensed chef and nutritionist.” Résistance mercilessly delivered the cold-hard fact!

Alas, the cookoff had been decided by the difference of Psjohn having governmental license! Of course, any kind of official license was a certification of one’s technique or talent. This is extremely important, especially in Japan, where a certificate or license could drastically affect your chance of getting a job and/or your starting salary!! You can even apply for different departments depending on the licenses you have! I strongly encourage you Dear Readers to apply for all the national certificates you can get your hands on!!!

“Fwahahahahaha! It’s over, Wataru! I win!” Psjohn laughed, puffing his chest out with pride!

At this moment, a thought struck Wataru!

(...What do I care who won the cookoff!?!?!?)

Come to think of it, the cookoff was something that Psjohn had forced upon them! It didn’t matter at all, at the end of the day!! While it may seem despicable to go back on their deal and fight his way past Psjohn anyway, Psjohn had poisoned Wataru’s sandwich in the first place! They would merely be getting even for that low blow!!!

“...Take this!!!!!!!!!!!!” Wataru suddenly took a slice of lemon he had hidden in his pocket and squeezed it so the juice squirted right into Psjohn’s single eye!

Sprasfhraghlaprsh!!!!

The concentrated juice of the otherworldly Wind Lemon stung Psjohn's eye!!

"*Grrrrraghgragh!* My eye! My eye!" Psjohn instinctively covered his eye with his hands!

"You're wide open!" Wataru just punched Psjohn in the stomach!

"*Greh!*" Psjohn fell to the ground, knocked out by the punch! His governmental licenses couldn't help him now! Anyone would be knocked out from taking such a punch in the gut! Violence always wins! That's a universal truth!!!

"Phew... It was a tough battle, but we won!!"

Aria immediately jumped in with the compliment! "You're amazing, Wataru!"

"Hm. Incredible, Wataru. You really defeated the third Master, fair and square." Résistance was impressed!

"Oh, yeah! I'm a hot-blooded fighter, after all! Ain't nothing but a thing!"

Wataru struck a victorious pose with a brimming smile!! He had somehow succeeded at defeating the third of the Four Masters!! But he was yet to find out... the true terror of the fourth of the Four Masters...!!!

Meanwhile, in the Demon Lord's castle... the blue slime messenger came jiggling in as the Demon Lord Deus was sitting comfortably at his throne, eating his chocolate parfait.

"M-My Demon Lord! Master Cyclo Psjohn, the third Master, has been defeated by Wataru!"

Deus frowned. "He's even defeated Psjohn... *Om nom...* We only have one Master left, then... *Gulp...*" He stared out into the air.

"My Demon Lord! Aren't we in danger!?" the slime cried out with concern, jiggling his gelatinous body as hard as he could.

Deus simply smiled confidently, a tiny blob of chocolate staining the corner of his mouth. "Hmph. Worry not, little slime. The final Master is an extremely powerful monster. Not even Wataru will have an easy time against that one."

“I sure hope so...”

“I’ll give the order to take care of Résistance while we’re at it... *chomp chomp...*” Deus quietly announced, taking another bite out of his parfait.

Résistance, now that she had betrayed him, was no use to Deus.

The slime spoke up with another jiggle. “M-My Demon Lord... I don’t think that chocolate parfait is very good for you...”

As our Dear Readers very well know, a chocolate parfait boasts a murderous amount of calories and sugar. The slime had spoken up out of concern for the diabetic Demon Lord’s health, but Deus completely ignored the comment.

“In any case, that Wataru... I never expected a human to get this close to me... *Hmhmhm...* Interesting...” Deus chuckled, his shoulders quaking...

“M-My Demon Lord... I don’t think you should have any more sweets...”

“Perhaps... Perhaps... I may end up fighting Wataru myself... *Ahahahm...* How exciting...”

As the Demon Lord held his parfait, an evil flame roiled within his eyes...

To be continued in the next chapter: “Wataru VS the Fourth Master! Beware the Werewolf!!”

*Sources:

[7] *The Iron Stomach ~ Make Your Digestive Tract Supersonic* — Isekai Tensei Publishing
[8] *The History of Systema: Revealed!* — Isekai Tensei Publishing

Chapter 5: Wataru VS the Fourth Master! Beware the Werewolf!

“We haven’t seen so much as a glimpse of the Demon Lord’s castle yet...” Aria muttered.

“Not a single glimpse!” Wataru agreed. After leaving the restaurant behind, the trio had been trudging through the wasteland for quite a while, but their destination was nowhere to be seen. “But we are getting closer to it! I can’t wait!” Wataru couldn’t contain his excitement as he imagined the formidable foe at the end of his journey. Unbothered by the glaring sun, he carried on, holding his head and shoulders high. Still, he couldn’t afford to feel complacent. There was one more Master blocking their way, after all. Worse yet, they didn’t know the Master’s true form or powers. This made their next foe extremely tricky and dangerous.

It was seven o’clock in the evening when Aria tiredly spoke up. “Wataru, why don’t we set up camp here? I don’t think I can walk any further.” She couldn’t shake the overwhelming exhaustion that resulted from walking through the wasteland in a straight line.

“All right, let’s set up camp around here!!” Wataru heartily agreed.

“Look,” Résistance said, and pointed to a large rock nearby. “That rock’s a good size. Why don’t we set up under it.”

The trio began to make camp by the rock.

“Leave the fire to me!!!” Wataru chucked a pile of branches they had collected throughout their walk onto the ground. He roared, “Flm!!!!!!” With a sharp exhale, Wataru punched the air directly above the pile of branches. Soon, a small trail of smoke emerged from the bundle! The small ember spread and before long had morphed itself into a respectable campfire!! It was incredible!!! “Check it out! I used a super-fast punch to heat up the air and light the branches on fire! Behold the power of science!!!”

“That’s amazing, Wataru!” Aria jumped right in with the compliment, despite not understanding a smidgen of what Wataru had just said!

At the very same moment, Résistance noticed something! “Hm? What is that over there?”

Wataru and Aria followed her pointing finger to find a figure walking through the wasteland under the darkening sky. It was a very feeble-looking elder clothed in rags!

“Huh... Maybe he’s lost! Let’s help that old man!” Just as he was hot-blooded and hardcore, Wataru was a Japanese man with a kind heart! Therefore, he never forsook anyone in need!!!

“You’re right, let’s help him!” Aria loudly called for the elderly gentleman! “Hey, you! The broke-looking geezer wearing scraps!”

The elder heard the insulting salutation and wobbled over to the party!

“Mister, we thought you might be in a pickle. Why don’t you rest here with us tonight!?!?!?” Wataru proposed!

The elder gave Wataru a joyful smile! “Really? Thank you very much. I seem to have lost my way...”

“We’ve got to help each other out, out here!” Wataru said, energetically popping squats! It was such an admirable quality of Wataru that he never missed an opportunity to train!

Now, the party of four surrounded the campfire!!!!

“...So, what are you doing all the way out here?” Wataru asked the old man! It did seem strange that a man his age would come all the way out to a desolate wasteland!

“I’m a sculptor. I came to gather the high-quality clay around here... It’s embarrassing, but I’ve lost my way home. Growing old isn’t all fun and games, is it...?” The old man scratched his head, a little embarrassed!

“Age is but a number!” Wataru countered! “My master turns a hundred and twenty this year, but he’s still as energetic as ever! I have a feeling you’ll have a

long and healthy life!” Wataru reminisced about his martial arts teacher back in the old world!

“H-Hundred and twenty... That’s quite impressive...” The elder was a little taken aback!

“...Résistance!” Aria called to Résistance, who had been blankly staring at the flames.

“What is it?”

“...How about a Payblade duel?”

“Ahaha, bring it on! Come to think of it, we never finished our last match!” Résistance immediately produced a hand-made Payblade arena from her pocket!

A few hours had passed! It was now ten o’clock at night!

“Grr! Not too shabby, Aria!”

“You’re not bad yourself, Résistance!”

Aria and Résistance were locked in a Payblade battle, with neither one managing to gain the upper hand!! Wataru watched them with sleepy eyes! “Oof... I’m getting tired... I’m going to bed...!!!” He flopped down to the ground, still wearing his school uniform, and immediately began sleeping peacefully! Since Wataru always kept a healthy sleep schedule of nine PM to three AM each day, Wataru couldn’t keep his eyes open anymore!

“Oh, okay, Wataru. Maybe we should go to bed, too!” Aria said!

“I think we should!” agreed Résistance. “Our battle is to be continued!”

Aria and Résistance packed up their Payblades and prepared for bed!

“Everybody going to bed, already? Then I suppose I should tuck myself in, too...” The old man produced a sleeping bag from his brown leather bag and began to make his bed!

“Yes, let’s put out the fire then.” Aria took a step towards the campfire!!!

“...*Mwahahah*, Wataru, you helpless fool...!” The old man’s tone suddenly

changed!

“What...?” Aria couldn’t believe her ears at hearing such a drastic change!

“Aria, get away from him, now!” Résistance called out, quickly grasping the hilt of her sword!

“...Wh-Who are you...?” Aria timidly asked, slowly backing away from the old man!

The old man stood up and tossed his sleeping bag aside! He flexed all the muscles in his body! “...Me? Heh heh, I suppose there’s no need to hide it any longer!” A sinister grin crossed his face! “I am the final Master, Wolfman!” he shouted at ear-splitting volume! Brown fur began to cover his body as all of his muscles enlarged!

“Y-You’re a... werewolf!?” Aria was dumbfounded!

But who could have blamed her!? Who could have believed this feeble old man would transform into a monstrosity-shredded werewolf!? He had grown close to ten feet tall, and his shirt was stretched near to the bursting point by his immense muscles! The transformation was so drastic that it had clearly violated several laws of physics!

“Gwahahahahaha! I disguised myself as an old man to get close to Wataru and ambush him while he was unaware! The absolute fool of a man fell for such a simple scheme!” Wolfman victoriously bellowed!

Meanwhile, Wataru was still fast asleep! There was no indication that he would wake up any time soon!!!

“Wake up, Wataru!” Aria yelled!

“Urm... *Sleepy-sleepy-sounds...*” Wataru remained dead asleep!!!!

“Y-You’re Wolfman...! I’d heard your name before, but I never expected that your true form would be a werewolf! What a masterful disguise...!” Résistance muttered, cold sweat dripping down her face!

Please, for the love of all that is holy, IT WAS HIS NAME!! SHE SHOULD HAVE KNOWN!!!

“Long time no see, Résistance! I’ve heard about you from the Demon Lord!

You're neutral now, done with the Four Masters?"

"That's right!" she admitted!

"Hmph! But I don't care what you say! You're just a traitor!" Wolfman pulled his shoulders back, stretching out his impressive chest!*Rrrrrriipppppppp!!*

His shirt ripped itself apart, revealing an impossibly muscular torso completely covered in brown fur! His pectorals and abdominal muscles were inhumanly jacked!! The amount of muscle mass that could be seen under the fur was unbelievable!

"Let's begin!!!" Wolfman roared! He instantly lunged at Résistance, his picturesque mane flowing in the wind!

"Wh-What the—!?"

Wolfman's fist rocketed at Résistance! She immediately drew her sword and braced it with both hands, blocking the werewolf's punch with the blade! But such a delicate block couldn't stop the full force of Wolfman's blow!

"Rrrragh!" Even though he didn't hit Résistance directly, Wolfman's overwhelming strength was still powerful enough to send her flying!

"Agh!" She managed to adjust her position in mid-air and landed on her feet, but a flash of pain crossed her face! "Grr, this isn't going to be easy..."

Werewolves were monsters with incomparably stronger muscles than humans! Résistance's advantage of having a sword couldn't do too much to make up for that!

"Hmph! Not too bad, Résistance, but I'll play with you later! First I have to take care of him!" Wolfman grabbed the sleeping Wataru by his ankle!!! "I'll just swallow him whole!" He opened his jaws wide and swallowed the still-sleeping Wataru whole without even chewing!!

"N-No! Wataru!" Aria fell to her knees, devastated!

What a turn of events! Wataru was so easily devoured without even a fight! What a shocking tragedy to have befallen our hero in the midst of his quest to defeat the Demon Lord! Dear Readers, I know your hot-blooded tears are soaking into these pages or splashing on your screens right now!!! But now that

our protagonist has been eaten, there is no way to continue this novel! The story ends here!

Farewell, Wataru!!!!

On a separate note, there was a fairytale in Wataru's world called Little Red Riding Hood. While there were some variations in the telling depending on the region, here's the gist:

One day, a little girl called Little Red Riding Hood is heading through the forest to her grandmother's house on an errand. However, her grandmother had already been eaten by an evil wolf. Having disguised himself as the grandmother, the evil wolf tricks and eats Little Red Riding Hood, too. Then, the wolf falls asleep with a full stomach. A hunter happens to come across the scene, and cuts open the wolf's stomach to rescue them. Happily ever after.

Now, allow me to present a hypothesis. What if Little Red Riding Hood's hobby wasn't anything cutesy like playing with flowers or dolls, but sumo wrestling? What if Little Red Riding Hood's grip strength was nowhere near 10 or 20 pounds, but an unbelievable 500? What if Little Red Riding Hood was no little girl, but a Hot-blooded Fighting Teen? ...The result is self-evident. Any wolf who let this Little Red Riding Hood into his stomach would regret the day he was born.

"W-Wataru..." Aria groveled in devastation!

"Grahahahaha! Wataru is no more!" Wolfman declared gleefully!

"Grr...!" Résistance glared at Wolfman as she readied her sword!

They were positively doomed! No one was going to save them now!

"Now, Résistance... You're next...!" Wolfman growled ominously, and grinned as if to show off his sharp fangs! His beastly eyes stared into Résistance's!!

"Hmph! I'd like to see you try! I won't go down so easily, Wolfman!" Résistance tightened her grip on her sword, and raised it above her head! She bravely leapt at Wolfman!

“Rahahahahaha, bring it on!” Wolfman squatted down, and held out his right hand!

“Aaaaahhhh!” Résistance swung her sword down straight at the werewolf’s face! But Wolfman quickly swung his arm, deflecting the sword with his sharp claws!

ClIIIIllankkkkkkkk!!!!

Sparks flew, and the sound of scraping metal echoed through the wasteland!

“I’m not done!” Résistance persistently readied for her next attack! She lunged forward at Wolfman once more!

“Nice try!” With a cocky grin, Wolfman used his extraordinary leg muscles to leap high above her!

Résistance’s attack missed! Her sword cut through nothing but empty space! “Grr!”

“Playtime’s over!” Wolfman used the downward momentum of his fall to put extra force behind a kick aimed at Résistance!

“Watch out, Résistance!” Aria cried!

“Urm!” Résistance jumped to the side, just in time to dodge Wolfman’s kick!

“Huh, you’re a fast one!! But how long can you keep it up!?” Wolfman taunted, still maintaining his victorious expression.

Résistance frowned as she raised her sword once more! Beads of sweat adorned her face! It was clear to see that her endurance was close to spent! Still, she showed no sign of giving up! “No... I’m not done yet!!” she shouted, and charged the werewolf! “Rrragghhh!!!” She closed the distance between them in the blink of an eye, and went to kick the werewolf in his side!

Wolfman anticipated the attack, however, and swiftly reached out with both arms!

Catchhhhhhhh!!!

Wolfman spectacularly caught Résistance’s kick in his hands!!!

“I got you now...!”

“Grr!!”

He yanked Résistance around by her leg and violently tossed her entire body into the air with the ease of an Olympic hammer thrower! Even though Résistance was a small woman, she was still wearing heavy armor! This only served to reestablish how much strength Wolfman packed in those fur-covered muscles!!

Résistance crashed into the ground 10 meters away! “Rrragghhh!!”

Dust erupted into a cloud as a sharp pain wracked her body! Résistance could not even make a sound in her agony! Her eyes widened, and she struggled to climb to her feet, but to no avail!

Having watched the fight go down, Aria could only mutter “R-Résistance...!” Of course, she wanted to run to Résistance as soon as she could to heal her with magic! But that would have been suicide, with Wolfman standing between the two of them!!

“Grahahaha... You’re journey ends here...!”

They were in absolute, mortal danger! Was Wolfman about to devour Aria and Résistance, too!?

“Rrh!!!!” A shout was heard coming from Wolfman’s stomach!!!

Gsh!

A section of Wolfman’s stomach suddenly bulged outwards, then snapped back with a heavy vibration!

“Wh-What the!?” Astounded by the sudden shock of pain, Wolfman could only stand there, aghast!

Gggshhh!!!

Ggggggshhhhhh!!!!

Wolfman’s stomach distended further and further with each impact!

“You’re...!?” Wolfman was in complete shock!

Our astute Dear Readers must already realize what was happening! That’s right!! Wataru was punching his way out of Wolfman’s stomach!!!

“Rrh!!!!”

Ggggggggggggggggggshhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Wolfman’s whole body quaked as an incredible shock shook through him!

“Blergh!” Wolfman heaved and threw up his stomach contents, i.e., Wataru!

“Hoooooooo-aaaah!!!!” Wataru shot out of Wolfman’s mouth! “All right!!!”

He rolled on the ground and bounced right up onto his feet, standing on the wasteland sand, brightly lit by moonlight! Hot-blooded Fighting Teen WATARU was back!

Tears of joy sprang from Aria’s eyes! “W-Wataru!” Wataru was Aria’s last hope of saving her parents from the Demon Lord, as well as her comrade with whom she had survived trials and tribulations and band practice! A hot-blooded tear trickled down her cheek!

“What took you so long, Wataru?” Résistance gave a relieved smile as she sheathed her sword! Despite her insistence on keeping a neutral standing, she considered Wataru a close friend!

“...Sorry for the wait!” Wataru apologized with a breezy smile, crossing his arms!

The word “impossible” had been scrubbed, erased, and censored completely from this man’s dictionary... In fact, his dictionary contained only the word “possible”!!!!

“D-Damn... I didn’t expect you to start beating on my guts... Quite impressive, Wataru!” Wolfman shouted as he panted in pain!

“I thought so, too! Who are you, anyway!?!? Where’s that old man!?!?!?”

That’s right! Since Wataru had been fast asleep until moments ago, he’d had no way of knowing that the old man had been Wolfman in disguise!

“Wataru! This werewolf is Wolfman, the Fourth Master! He was just putting on the guise of a deteriorated old man! He was tricking us!” Aria jumped in with the swift and accurate explanation!

Now, Wataru was completely caught up... and enraged!!! “That’s not fair... How dare you attack your opponent while they’re asleep! You’re going to pay

for this!!!” Wataru shouted!

“Hmph! Did you expect monsters to play fair!? But now it seems I’m forced to fight you head-on!” Wolfman took a fighting stance with one perfect fluid motion! He squatted low, and outstretched his right arm in a dramatic tableau with the grace of a *kabuki* actor!

Wataru witnessed this stance and cracked a grin! “Your muscles, your stance, your aura... Not bad!!! I’m gonna take you on with all I’ve got!!!” Wataru reached into the pocket of his school uniform’s jacket! He produced a meter-long, crimson piece of fabric!! It was a *hachimaki*, a Japanese headband!!!

“A headband... What good do you think that’s going to do you?” Wolfman asked, still maintaining his pose!

“What...? It’s a *hachimaki*! What do you think!?!?!?” Wataru shouted with the face of a *nio*, and tied the *hachimaki* around his head with a swift yet passionate motion!!! “I’ll tell you what this is!!! This legendary *hachimaki* has been passed down through my family for generations!!! The Exploding-Blood Demon Slayer!!!!!!” The tails of his crimson *hachimaki* danced in the wind! Wataru now resembled the Japanese folktale hero, *Momotaro*, or “Peach Boy”!! A hot-blooded, fighting Peach Boy, ready to slay the demon!!! “With this *hachimaki* around my head, my hot-blooded energy is multiplied a hundred fold!!!

Wolfman couldn’t contain his amazement! There was no telling how much of Wataru’s claims we could trust, but we must have faith that our protagonist knew what he was talking about!! By equipping said *hachimaki*, Wataru’s hot-blooded energy was multiplied a hundred fold!

(**Hachimaki* — Our well-read Dear Readers, as intellectuals, might have read that the word *hachimaki* has its origins in the Japanese *hachi*, meaning “pot” and *maki*, meaning “wrap,” and that in feudal Japan, they called the wrap that kept their helmets on their head *hachimaki*, since *hachi* was also slang for the dome of one’s head or their helmets. *You read wrong*. The true origin of *hachimaki* dates back to the brilliant strategist of Ancient Rome, Hachi Maki (99 B.C.E. ~ ?). Before each battle, he provided every one of his soldiers with a thin strip of fabric to wrap around their heads in order to boost morale and to

identify their comrades more easily in combat. This tradition spread around the world, and became known as the ubiquitous *hachimaki* we all know and love today. In Japan, the word *hachimaki* can be written to mean two different meanings: “pot wrap” or “hot-blooded Demon Slayer.” [9])

“Hmph! You think you’re stronger now because of some cloth around your head!?” Wolfman challenged!

“Just wait and see!!!!” Wataru switched to his fighting stance! He lowered his center of gravity, and spread his feet wide! This is a universal fighting stance found in the likes of sumo wrestling!

“Are you ready, Wataru!?” Wolfman shouted!

“Yeah! Bring it on!!”

“Aaarrrooooo!!” Wolfman howled, his brown fur standing on end! He lunged at Wataru, raising his right arm as his mane fluttered in the wind!!

“Wataru! Watch out!” Aria cried out!

Wataru was in danger!!!

“Hraaaagh!!!!” Wolfman charged Wataru at incredible speed! The werewolf was nearly 10 feet tall, while Wataru stood at six foot four! This wasn’t looking good for our protagonist! Much to everyone’s surprise, Wataru showed no sign of dodging the attack, but only let out a deep exhale! “Woooooragghh! Take this!” Wolfman’s fist was fast approaching!! At this rate, Wataru would be defeated not long after his miraculous return from the werewolf’s belly!!!

Just as Wolfman’s fist was about to reach his face, Wataru shouted!!!
“Dflct!!!!”

Braggghhkkkt!!!!

An explosive sound echoed through the wasteland! But it wasn’t Wataru who was blown away, but Wolfman!!!

“Wh-What the...!?” Wolfman was dumbfounded, even as he was still in the air! Who could have blamed him for it!? Wolfman had just experienced being deflected by some sort of invisible wall the instant he was sure his fist would land on Wataru! “Th-This isn’t over!” Wolfman regained his balance in mid-air,

and landed on his feet with a heavy thud! He swung his right arm again, charging dauntlessly at Wataru!! “Rrrrrragghhhh!”

Still...!

“It’s no use... You can’t set foot in my territory...!!!!!”

Bragggghhhhhkkkkrrrrrggggrrrrrkkkkk!!!!

There was another reflective sound, and Wolfman was turned aside once more! Wataru was moving too fast for him to understand what had happened!

Résistance, too, failed to follow! “This fight is far beyond me...! I don’t have a clue what’s going on, but there’s no way Wolfman can win!”

Aria cried out, elated! “Wow! You’re incredible, Wataru! You’re taking out your Payblade faster than humanly possible and spinning it on the ground to create a tornado-like wall of air to deflect Wolfman!”

“What!? That’s what he’s doing!?” Résistance couldn’t conceal her shock at the ridiculous tactic! And did Aria just suggest that Wataru might not be human...!?

Aria responded! “No idea! I just made it up because I couldn’t see what he did at all!”

“Stop making this more confusing than it already is! I wouldn’t put it past Wataru!”

Allow me to explain what actually happened to some of our Dear Readers who lack the superhuman eyesight necessary to follow Wataru’s tactics!!! Wataru just employed the Supersonic Shoulder Thrust, a legendary karate move that had been passed down for centuries in Osaka, Japan!!!

(*Supersonic Shoulder Thrust — A move invented by a young man studying karate in Osaka. The physical movement is almost identical to that of an ordinary punch, but the user flexes their shoulder muscles to the very limit of the human body at the moment of impact to boost the damage of the attack. In one all-too-famous example, a karate fighter used this move to obliterate a cannonball fired by the Tokugawa army during the Siege of Osaka in the winter of 1614. [10])

Wataru used this move to strike Wolfman with a supersonic punch while keeping his own movement to a minimum! This attack was no less than an invisible punch! That's why neither Aria, Résistance, nor even Wolfman could observe Wataru's attack with their naked eyes!

Wataru stood with arms proudly crossed as his crimson *hachimaki* fluttered in the wind! “You’re out of luck, Wolfman!! You never stood a chance against me!!!”

“H-How could this be...!? I’m defeated...!” Wolfman conceded from the middle of an arc through the air, having been blown away once more by Wataru’s Supersonic Shoulder Thrust! He crashed into the large rock by their campsite!!! The rock promptly exploded!!! One of the pieces stabbed Aria right between the eyes!!!

“Grgrglarghhhgaaaahhhhhghghghghghghghgh!!!!!!!” Aria shouted, blood spewing out of her face!!!

“Are you all right, Aria!?!?!?”

She was A-OK, of course! She could use healing magic!

Résistance came up to Wataru! “You did it, Wataru. Now you’ve defeated all Four Masters of the Demon Lord.” She had suffered minor injuries all over her body from her fight against Wolfman, but Aria could simply heal those too, so they won’t be affecting the story in any way aside from my mentioning it right now!

“Yeah, the only one left to beat up is the Demon Lord!” Wataru untied the *hachimaki* from around his head and carefully placed it back in his jacket pocket!! He stared into Résistance’s eyes and mildly shouted, “Résistance... Are you still going to come with us!?!?!?”

“...What do you mean?” Résistance felt a little uneasy at how uncharacteristically serious Wataru was being!

“We’re going to face the Demon Lord for real, pretty soon! Even though you’re neutral... You might not make it out unscathed!!”

Wataru's words lingered heavily in Résistance's heart! It was true that Wolfman had just tried to kill Résistance! It wasn't hard for her to imagine that

the Demon Lord would try to do the same!!

Résistance stared right back at Wataru and answered without any hesitation!!
“I’ll follow you... Until the very end!”

“...All right!!” Wataru said no more than that!

And so, Wataru had defeated all four of the Four Masters! Only the Demon Lord remained! In the span of less than a single volume, for that matter! What other light novel has such a fast-paced plot!? But our protagonist and his party were yet to discover the final and most fearsome adversary standing between them and the Demon Lord!!!

Meanwhile, in the Demon Lord’s castle... The Demon Lord Deus was comfortably enjoying a sugar-sweet éclair on his throne as per usual when his messenger, the blue slime, came jiggling in.

“M-My Demon Lord! There’s a crisis! Even Master Wolfman has been defeated by Wataru and his allies!”

Deus frowned and halted his éclair-munching. “...That means... Could it be...?” He paused as if allowing the realization to bounce around in his head for a few moments. “Every single one of my Four Masters has been defeated...?” Deus reiterated, with deliberate calmness and slowness. His collected tone kindled with quiet fury.

“Th-That is correct...” The slime timidly confirmed, thoroughly uncomfortable.

The Demon Lord’s Four Masters, the previously undefeated, elite warriors, had all been defeated. Much worse, one of them had betrayed her master and turned to the other side. This was an unprecedented humiliation for the Demon Lord.

Deus quietly stood and shoved the rest of the éclair into his mouth in one smooth motion.

“M-Master Deus... It-It might be dangerous to... choke down your sweets like that...” The slime suggested, concerned for its master’s health.

Deus paid his messenger no mind, and continued to chew the éclair in his

mouth. “*Nom nom... chomp chomp... shlip shlop... Gulp...*” After thoroughly chewing and swallowing his sweet pastry, he stared down at the slime and spoke. “Slime. I am feeling some complex emotions right now. Of course, I feel sorrow and anger for the comrades I’ve lost... but more than those emotions... more than anything else...”

“Y-Yes, My Demon Lord... More than anything else...?” the slime timidly urged.

Deus’s fists suddenly began to quiver... Much to the surprise of the slime, Deus cackled. “*Kah ha ha...* How peculiar... that I feel ‘happy’...!!”

“H-Happy...?” the slime parroted, the question mark practically visible above the area it considered its head.

“That’s right! I am excited! I have not felt this much elation since I fought Résistance... No, much more than that!” His excited voice reverberated throughout the room.

“I am counting the seconds before I get to fight Wataru!!”

The slime gave its blue, translucent, gelatinous body a sharp jiggle. “Master Deus... Your Great Excellence will surely prevail over Wataru! May the odds be in your favor, Master!”

“I know they are!” Deus confidently confirmed.

Encountering and clashing with powerful opponents was the most sublime form of entertainment for the Demon Lord, who lived his days in boredom.

Deus clenched his fists and exhaled deeply, as if he was trying to contain his overwhelming urge to go fight his nemesis this very instant. “Phew... Hurry up and come at me, Wataru Ito...!!!”

To be continued in the next chapter, “Wataru, Confusion! The One and Only Literary Critique Battle!!!”

*Sources:

[9] *Know the Facts About the Origin of Hachimaki* — Isekai Tensei Publishing

[10] *The Real Story that Defied Cannon: The Punch that Defined History* —
Isekai Tensei Publishing

Chapter 6: Wataru, Confusion! The One and Only Literary Critique Battle!

The day after the hard battle against Wolfman, the party slept in until the afternoon to rest up!

“All right, that should do it!” Wataru urged the others on, primed to set off on their journey! “Let’s go!”

“Okay!”

“Let’s.”

Aria and Résistance began packing up their things!

“Hey, Résistance!! How much farther to the Demon Lord’s castle!?”

“Let’s see... At least two more days of travel, I’d say.”

“All right!” Even though Wataru had defeated all of the Four Masters, it seemed there would still be a tough journey ahead before they would reach the Demon Lord’s castle! But that small fact did not daunt Wataru in the slightest!

“Okie dokie!!! Let’s get back on track and head for the Demon Lord!!!” he proudly declared, thrusting his trusty right arm towards the heavens!

The trio began climbing the dune before them! They treaded carefully, so as to not trip and slide back down the hill! As the afternoon sun beat down on them, the party carried on! When they crested the hill, they were all astonished by the view!

“...What!?!?” What could have Wataru, Aria and Résistance been so shocked to see at this moment!?!? Take a moment to think of something shocking, and once you have a well-formed guess, go ahead and read the next sentence, Dear Readers!

“...Isn’t that the Demon Lord’s castle!?!?”

“It sure is,” confirmed Résistance.

“The Demon Lord’s castle!” repeated Aria.

It was the Demon Lord’s castle! Much to their amazement, the Demon Lord’s castle was standing before them, engulfed in a vile aura! Had their view not been obscured by the hill they’d just climbed, they would have known that the Demon Lord’s castle was right under their noses!!

“That’s closer than I thought,” Résistance muttered, unconcerned.

“What do you mean ‘than you thought,’ Résistance!? You weren’t even close!”

“Chill out, Wataru. It’s been a while since I’ve come here.”

“Why’s that, though?” Aria interjected. “Don’t the Four Masters get summoned to the castle all the time? ...Unless you were being bullied by the others!”

“Never!” Résistance rushed to answer! “To be honest, there’s nothing to do around here. Whenever he’d have birthday parties or shoot fireworks or something, we always gathered at a more convenient location. So it’s been awhile since I’ve actually come all the way here.”

“I’ve been meaning to say this, but it sounds like the Four Masters have some fun office gatherings,” Aria remarked.

“I bet you guys had great health care, too!!”

“It doesn’t matter anymore. Let’s go.” Résistance stepped forward. “Not even I know what traps lie ahead. Wataru, Aria, you need to be very careful.”

The castle before them was very impressive in size, at least five stories tall! Steel double doors that appeared to be tightly sealed held the castle’s front gate. Naturally, infiltrating the castle would not be easy! Wataru imagined that the Demon Lord, the strongest being in this fantasy world, waited inside the fortress-like castle! He couldn’t contain his excitement!!!

“Aaaaghh!! I can’t wait!! Let’s go in!!!” Wataru began to jump-squat straight towards the castle gate!

Résistance grabbed him, using all her strength to hold him back! “Wait,

Wataru! That's suicide!"

"Why??? Is it the jump-squats!?!?!?"

"The Demon Lord's castle is protected by a special magic barrier. The doors won't budge for anyone without permission to enter the castle."

"Oh, okay... Well, you're the ex-Master, Résistance! Can you get in!?!?"

She shook her head! "I doubt it. Wolfman tried to kill me without question, too... As you've suspected, Wataru, the Demon Lord is trying to get rid of all of us, including me."

Wataru's party had already hit a roadblock! Infiltrating the Demon Lord's castle, as expected, was not going to be an easy task!

Suddenly, Wataru found something standing beside the castle gate!!!
"Hey!!!! Look at that!!!!!"

The other two followed his outstretched finger to find a little kiosk with a large sign above it!

"What does the sign say!?!?" Wataru implored!

"'Demon Lord's Castle Gatekeeper...'" Aria read.

Résistance crossed her arms and looked dubious! "Strange. There was never a weird kiosk like that before..."

"They must have improved their security, knowing that Wataru would be coming."

"All right, let's check it out!"

"It's a trap, Wataru. Don't." Résistance stopped him once again.

"She's right, Wataru. Let's look for another way in."

Wataru completely ignored their pleas for rationality! "I'll see what they have to say!!" Wataru resumed jump-squatting towards the kiosk! The other two reluctantly followed, each jump-squatting to the best of their abilities...!!

"Excuse me!!! Is anyone here!?!?" Wataru called!

The kiosk attendant popped his head out! “Shut up! I’m not deaf, you know!”

The attendant had green skin, pointed ears and nose, and a short stature of four foot four! The angered attendant was a male goblin!

“Um, are you the gatekeeper of this castle?” Aria timidly asked!

“That’s right,” the goblin attendant admitted!

“All right, then let us in!” Wataru begged, with the expression of a *Nio*!

The attendant mercilessly shook his head! “No.”

“What!? Then what are we supposed to do!?!?” Wataru cried!

“My Demon Lord has told me all about you. Wataru, Aria, and Résistance, the ex-Master... If you want to get into the castle, you’ll have to go through me.”

“Bring it on! I’ll never turn down a fight!!” Wataru said, cracking his neck! His eyes burned bright with the fighting spirit of a challenger!

“Ooh, you have enthusiasm, I’ll give you that. But the rules of this game ain’t a simple fist fight!” The goblin attendant stepped out of the kiosk, and stood before Wataru’s party! He crossed his arms and declared: “I challenge you to a literary critique battle! We will each read a particular novel, and whoever writes the better review, wins!”

“???”

Wataru’s confusion was audible! The sheer ridiculousness of this “battle” the goblin proposed nearly caused his mind to explode, and all Wataru could do was stand there and make that noise!

“Snap out of it, Wataru!” Aria shouted, violently shaking Wataru by his shoulders!!

“...Snp! That was close! My brain nearly suffered permanent damage... But a literary critique...!? I really didn’t expect something like this!”

“But how is the winner determined?” Aria asked!

“Don’t worry. We got a bona fide judge right here,” the goblin said, turning to Résistance!

“M-Me again...?”

Once again, the knight-in-armor with the long blue locks, Résistance, would serve as the judge in their contest!

“Who else but Résistance could pass fair judgment in a battle between human and monster!?”

“I guess you have a point...” Résistance reluctantly accepted!

“Now, allow me to introduce myself before we do battle. Name’s Booker! Booker the goblin! I read over a thousand novels a year! I eat, sleep, and read! Of course, critiquing a book ain’t nothing but a thing to me!” Booker proudly declared!

Wataru’s confidence seemed shaken in light of this introduction! “Erm. I read as many books as the next man, but I’ve never critiqued any of them... This is bad!!”

Wataru was at the edge of a proverbial cliff!

“The novel we’ll be reading is this.” Booker scuttled around the kiosk, and brought out a book!!

The cover prominently featured a drawing of a female orc in very revealing clothing!! With ginormous boobs!!

“What the hell is that!?”

“This is the high-fantasy novel that’s all the rage in the Wind Continent this year! It’s called *It’s Me, a Shy Orc Loner with a Heart of Gold (Notice Me, Senpai!) Who Got Reborn In Another World, a.k.a. ‘Isekai,’ Where I Am Getting Into All Sorts of Troubles, Hijinks, and Shenanigans, Oh My! Or Me, Oh My!* for short!”

“That title is so long! It’s stupid!!!!!!” Wataru unleashed his wrath!!!!!!

Aria stopped him! “I’m sorry, Wataru! That’s the trend in the Wind Continent right now!”

Alas, we are all slaves to trends! Wataru had no choice but to accept the challenge as-is!!

“There are four hours on the clock!” Booker declared! “We will each read the first chapter of this novel, and write a review of it!”

“Damn...! I gotta do what I gotta do! Aria, I can’t read the language of this world! Read the chapter out loud for me!”

“No problem! We’re almost at the Demon Lord! We can do this!”

The dramatic contest of literary criticism between Wataru and Booker began...!

The party (and Booker) had moved away from the Demon Lord’s castle to a stage that had been built specifically for this contest. Despite that grandiose description, it was no more than a simple platform of sun-bleached wood that stood open under the glittering sun of the wasteland. There only things on the stage were two desks, each one with a stack of paper and a quill. Nevertheless, the destinies of Wataru and his allies would be determined here. The party stepped up to the platform with intense expressions.

“...Let us begin. Are you ready?” Booker prompted. Wataru nodded. “We’ll have Résistance give the go-ahead.”

Résistance nodded. “On your marks... get set... Review!”

The moment Résistance said the final word, Aria and Booker both immediately opened their copy of the book. Booker rapidly began to flip the novel, turning page after page and reading just as quickly.

“We can’t fall far behind...! Let’s do this, Wataru!”

“Rvw!!!!!” Wataru shouted, crossing his log-thick arms.

Aria began reading *It’s Me, a Shy Orc Loner with a Heart of Gold (Notice Me, Senpai!) Who Got Reborn In Another World, a.k.a. ‘Isekai,’ Where I Am Getting Into All Sorts of Troubles, Hijinks, and Shenanigans, Oh My! (Or Me, Oh My! for short)* out loud:

““My name is Tatsuya Gi-orc-vanni Sat-orc. As you can probably tell from my name, I’m an orc. I’m average-looking, I guess, but I really can’t deal with people. I prefer just being all on my own. Oh my. In short, I’m a sensitive O-boy with a heart of gold that’s locked in a cramped cage. Oh my...”

““And so, just when I was working my bandit shift in the woods with my childhood friend, Yuko Mylene Kurat-orc, who is totally a girl and the only person I’ve ever opened my heart to, I got (who would’ve guessed?) run over by a runaway high-speed carriage. Oh, my. I’d really stepped in it this time. It looked like my life had come to an early c-orc-clusion. Hold your laughter, chums, because the stuff that happened after that is going to blow your mind.””

“I don’t know where to start!!!!!!!!!!!!” Wataru had lost all hope!!!! Just a few paragraphs in, and he had already given up!

“Don’t give up, Wataru! It’s not easy reading it out loud, either!”

“Every single sentence hurts!”

“You can’t give up yet! The summary says that Tatsuya the protagonist and Yuko, his love interest, are both transported to another world from the impact of that carriage!”

“That story is ridiculous!!!! How does it make any sense that they’re transported to another world just from being run over!?!?!?!?” Wataru exploded without a shred of self-awareness!!!!

Even as Wataru anguished, Booker was steadily reading ahead! There was no time for Wataru to wallow in cringe!

“Dammit, I just gotta do it! Keep reading, Aria!!”

“Okay!” Aria continued reading the novel!

““After this and that, I woke up in a calm field in a strange world. Good grief. Give me a break. I thought being run over by that carriage would have killed me, but apparently I was transported to a world completely separate from my own. Good grief. What a bizarre turn of events. Whatever. No sense moping around this place. First things first, I had to find my childhood friend, Yuko. She was such a bothersome friend (she never was and never will be more than that). I recalled her outgoing and energetic yet somehow soothing face, and I let out a deep sigh. Good grief...””

“Crrrrrrrraaagggggggghhhhhhhhh!!!!!!!” Wataru’s soul was breaking!!!!

“A-Are you all right, Wataru!?”

“How can I be all right!? How many times does he have to repeat ‘good grief’!?”

“That’s just the way it is, Wataru! The ‘good-grief protagonist’ is the current trend in Wind Continent literature right now!” Aria explained in tears! Curse those almighty trends!

“Besides, he’s way too quick to accept that he’s in a different world! What is with this guy!? Stupid millennial!!” Wataru fumed, once again utterly failing to self-reflect at all!

“Wataru, you can’t think about it! Readers will get bored if every book spends a lot of time exploring that!”

“Dammit, you have a point!!!” Wataru conceded, setting his expression into the stony rage of a *Nio* statue! It was obvious that spending too much time on the inter-world transition would only slow down the tempo!

“We just have to keep reading! We can’t even challenge the Demon Lord if we don’t win this contest!”

“Grr...!” Wataru’s fists shook in helpless fury! Aria was right! All he could do now was focus all of his mental strength on continuing to read the novel!

“Rrrraaggghhh! I won’t stop you anymore! Aria, keep reading that first chapter, no matter what!” It was do-or-die for our hot-blooded fighting teen, Wataru!

“I won’t let you down!” Aria agreed, and resumed reading the novel out loud...!!

An hour had passed!

“Wataru. That’s chapter one...” Aria declared, panting. “We did it...!” Beaten to her core, she turned to Wataru!

Wataru lay motionless on the ground, all of his life force drained out of him...!!!

“W-Wataru! Are you all right!?” Aria ran to him!

“N-No... The protagonist rescues a girl from some thugs in an alley, then the girl immediately falls for the guy and follows him around before he reluctantly lets her join the party... The same thing happened three times in one chapter...!!! The author has short-term memory loss!!!” Wataru was at his very limits! “That... has... to be... it...!!!” he squeezed out!

But if he were to fall now, all his agony would be for naught!

“Stay with me, Wataru! You’ll never make it to the Demon Lord if you give up now!” Aria desperately pleaded!

“Th-That’s right... I can’t give up...! I have to find some redeemable qualities about this book...!” Wataru stumbled to his feet and took up the quill!

“There you go, Wataru! That’s it! There’s still plenty of time on the clock!”

“Rrrrrraaaaaaaaagggghhhh!!! I’ll make my fists black with ink!!!” Wataru began writing his review with the last drops of his strength, his face twisted in wrath! Was there any other fighter in history who had risked his life to review a novel like this!?!? No, there was not!! Of course not!!!

“...Time’s up!” Résistance called, just as Wataru had finished scribbling out his review!

Four hours had passed since the commencement of the contest!! The sky had already darkened above them!!

“I... finished... it...!” Wataru said, beaten to his very bones!

Booker watched him with a smug grin! “Heh heh heh... This battle’s in the bag! I’ll start with my review!”

“Go ahead,” Résistance allowed.

Booker began reading the review he had written, his voice flat and steady!

“Here is my review for the first chapter of *It’s Me, a Shy Orc Loner with a Heart of Gold (Notice Me, Senpai!) Who Got Reborn In Another World, a.k.a. ‘Isekai,’ Where I Am Getting Into All Sorts of Troubles, Hijinks, and Shenanigans, Oh My!, or Me, Oh My!* for short! The biggest appeal of this piece is definitely

the manliness of Tatsuya, our protagonist! He's usually a shy orc, but once a girl's in trouble, he becomes a totally different man! He'll knock out any *Isekai* opposition with his overwhelming powers! All of the girls are so *kawaii*, too! Everyone is bound to find a character they'll fall for! For me, it's Hanako the slime, hands down! Thoroughly enjoy the fun, fast-paced adventure that is *Me, Oh My!*"

"...What was that revolting review!?!?!?!?" Wataru shouted in anger!!!

"Hold on, Wataru. While his delivery in reading it was uncomfortably disgusting, the content of that review is perfectly sound," Résistance calmly explained! "It showcases the good points of the story that would appeal to a broad audience."

"Heh heh heh... Looks like I've won, huh, Wataru?" Booker taunted!

"Grr! I'm not going to lose to that abomination! It's time to read my review!"

"Go ahead." Résistance nodded to Wataru.

With Résistance's permission, Wataru passionately began reading his review!

Behold, Wataru's penmanship!! "When I flipped through the book, it had that good paper smell, which made me smile. And the drawing on the cover was very good. The story was thinner than the paper it was written on, but the book itself is heavy enough to use as a weight, which makes it useful. 2/5 stars. Won't read again."

"Booker wins!" Résistance ruthlessly declared the victor!

Wataru was not happy with the decision! "Why?!?!?!?!?"

"Wataru, there's no use!" Not even Aria could defend Wataru! "You never stood a chance with that review!" How could this be!?

Booker guffawed, victorious!! "Gwa ha ha ha ha! Read 'em and weep, Wataru! I win!"

"Shut up!!!!!!!!!!!"

Wataru immediately folded his review into a paper plane and threw it straight at Booker!

Whhhhhhhhhiiiiirrrrrrrrr!!!!

The paper plane stabbed into Booker's temple at a speed of 400 km/h!!!!

"Graaagh!" Booker fell to the ground with an ugly cry, unconscious!

"All right! Now's our chance! Let's storm the Demon Lord's castle!!"

"W-Wait! That was a dirty trick, Wataru!" Aria protested, pointing out Wataru's behavior unbecoming of his hot-blooded fighter status!

"I know! But we need to save your parents from the Demon Lord, Aria! I can't be picky about how!"

"Wataru...!" Aria was moved to tears! I can feel your tears, too, Dear Readers! Who among us can contain our tears at Wataru choosing to save human lives over his identity as an honorable, hot-blooded fighter! "Okay! Let's go!" Aria ran after Wataru!

At that very moment, an ominous voice boomed out through the area! "...Hm hm hm... I've waited a long, long time for you, Wataru!"

"Who's that!?!?!" Wataru stopped in his tracks! He looked all around him, ready for anything!

"Th-That's... Deus, the Demon Lord!" Résistance answered, shaken!

Aria was frozen in astonishment, too! "The D-Demon Lord...!?"

A cloud of green fog erupted before Wataru, and a purple-skinned figure elegantly emerged from within it!

"You're... the Demon Lord!?!?" Wataru demanded, with the face of *Enma*, the ruler of the underworld!

Deus the Demon Lord, because that was indeed who this newcomer was, answered with a confident grin! "Correct. I am Deus, the Demon Lord. I had been waiting on my throne for your arrival, but I could no longer contain my excitement. I had to come and see for myself." He flourished his pure-white cape! Everyone had forgotten that up until now the Demon Lord had been practically a joke in this book! This was a serious moment! "Wataru... It's been long since I last battled a worthy foe...!"



“You’ve got your wish now, Demon Lord! Fight me, right here, right now!! When I win, release all the humans you have captured in the castle!!!”

“Hmph. *If* you win. Now, Résistance...”

Résistance jolted at suddenly being addressed by the Demon Lord! “Wh-What...?”

“According to my messenger, you have resigned as a Master and become... ‘neutral,’ if that’s what you want to call it. Is that right?” Deus demanded! His voice was as threatening as a knife to her throat! His solemnity and charisma were unparalleled!

“Y-Yes, that’s right...” Résistance admitted, her voice cracking as cold sweat trickled down her face.

Deus grinned! “Really... Well, you’re free to do anything you want now. I had intended to eliminate you, but I’ve lost my interest in a human like you.” He licked his lips, and stared condescendingly at Wataru! “...Now that I have such an appetizing human within arm’s reach.”

“F-Fine... I’ll do exactly that.” Résistance meekly backed off, understanding that her own strength was infinitesimal compared to that of the Demon Lord.

“Now, Wataru...” Deus proposed. “Why don’t we fight a little closer to my castle? You’ve come all this way.”

“Bring it on...!” Wataru countered confidently, undaunted by the Demon Lord’s oppressive aura!!

At last... the battle between Wataru and the Demon Lord was about to begin...!!

To be in continued in the next chapter, “Holy Crap! This Demon Lord is BAD!!!”

Chapter 7: Holy Crap! This Demon Lord is BAD!!!

The party left the poorly-made stage that had been constructed solely for the purpose of the literary criticism competition and returned to the wasteland by the Demon Lord's castle! Darkness had fallen, and moonlight illuminated the vast emptiness!

"Hmph. I'm itching to fight you, Wataru..." sneered the Demon Lord.

"Heh, you won't have that smirk on your face for much longer!"

"Now, now, there's no need for bravado. You're merely human, after all. You don't stand a chance."

"We'll see about that...!"

Deus and Wataru stared menacingly at each other, both ready for the fight with every fiber in their being! Meanwhile, Aria and Résistance watched them from afar.

"Why do you challenge me, Wataru? You have no reason to die trying to fight me," Deus asked, his white coat flowing in the wind!

"Isn't it obvious!? I want to face strong opponents! And I want to save those you've taken captive! What other reason do I need...!?"

Deus smiled in exaltation! "Hm hm hm... How single-minded. I like it. Straightforward and uncomplicated. Now that we've had this little tête-à-tête... Let us begin!" Deus flexed his fists, and an insidiously dark aura of power began to form itself around his hands!

"Wh-What is that...!?" Aria cried out nervously!

"It can't be...!" Résistance gasped!

"Do you know what it is, Résistance!?"

Résistance nodded! "It's the Demon Lord's most infamous attack! The hidden technique of the Holy Fists of the Demon Lord: 'Hardened Fists!' By concentrating his magic into his fists, he hardens them beyond their physical

limits!”

What in the world were the Holy Fists of the Demon Lord, you ask!?!?!? “The Holy Fists of the Demon Lord is a martial arts style developed by Deus himself! He uses a variety of refined magic spells to amplify his already monstrously powerful physical attacks! It’s a cunning and powerful fighting style!”
Résistance expertly expositied!!

“Heh, cool moves...!” Wataru could hardly contain his excitement in facing Deus the Demon Lord! The more powerful his opponent was, the more Wataru unlocked his potential!!

“...Any last words?” asked the Demon Lord politely!

“Don’t worry about *my* last words, Demon Lord!!”

“Hmph...” The corners of Deus’s lips twisted into a grin! “Wragh!!” He sprinted towards Wataru, and threw a right punch!

“Pnch!!!!” Wataru countered with a left punch!

Their fists collided!

Graggghragghgabbbragghaggh!!!!

A shockwave burst out from the point of the incredible impact! The powerful blast of air lifted a sharp rock from the ground, which stabbed Aria right between the eyes!

“Agggggggggggggggghhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!!!!”

“Just their fists colliding caused that...! It’s incredible!” Résistance uttered in amazement, ignoring Aria screaming beside her!

At that moment, but a little bit away...!

“Hey, what was that sound!?”

“Who knows!? Let’s check it out!”

A number of monsters came rushing out of the Demon Lord’s castle when they heard the commotion!

“Whoa, what’s all this!?”

“Look at that! Master Deus is fighting a human!”

“Heh, a human? He doesn’t stand a chance against Master Deus!”

“Get him, Master Deus!”

Before Aria and Résistance knew it, a crowd of monsters had formed behind them!

The monsters chanted out in unison: “Deus! Deus! Deus!” The Demon Lord had the absolute home-field advantage!

After healing her head wound with magic, Aria nervously looked around at the horde of monsters now surrounding her! “Yikes, this is a lot of monsters.... We’d better play along. The last thing we want is a fight.” Aria began chanting along with them. “Deus! Deus! Deus!”

“Hm. You have a good point,” Résistance admitted. “Deus! Deus! Deus!”

Oh, the humanity! Aria and Résistance were now cheering for Deus as well! No one was cheering on Wataru anymore! How could our heroines live with themselves!?!?

Still, Wataru was unbothered by any of that! “Rrrraaaggghhhh!”

“Hragh! Hragh!! Hragh!!!”

Wataru dodged Deus’s 700 km/h punches by a hair and countered with a 790 km/h kick! Deus, in turn, calmly maneuvered to elegantly avoid the attack, and thrust a flattened hand to stab Wataru in the face, knowing that the face was the most vulnerable location on the human body! A direct hit would be seriously damaging!

“Grr!!!” Wataru quickly arched backwards to dodge the attack! Deus’s darkness-enveloped hand nearly pierced his face, but Wataru managed to remain unscathed! He twisted his waist from that position and turned his dodge into a spinning kick! To pull off a kick like that from such an imbalanced starting position would not be possible without incredibly strong core muscles... but each and every muscle in the body of the hot-blooded fighting teen Wataru was incredibly strong!

“Hragh!” Deus teleported, appearing directly behind Wataru!

“What was that!?!? Magic!?!?!?” There was no magic in Wataru’s old world! Therefore, Wataru had no effective way to combat Deus’s vast arsenal of spells!

“Take this!” Deus cleanly landed a punch into Wataru’s spine at the speed of 800 km/h! Ouch! That had to hurt!! A lot!!!

“Graggghhhhh!!!!!!” Wataru fell to the ground at the speed of 890 km/h!

Crrrrrrrrdddddssshhhhhhh!!!!!!

The impact created a giant crater in the ground! Everything happened so fast that no one watching could understand what was happening!!! Their fight was on an entirely new level!!

“Mwahahahaha! Is that all you got, Wataru?” Deus cackled at Wataru!

“Take that!” jeered a monster from the sidelines!

“You never stood a chance against Master Deus, you puny human!”

“Master Deus! Finish off that foolish human!”

“Deus! Deus! Deus!” The crowd of monsters erupted in another Deus chant! Even Aria and Résistance were joining in, with genuine enthusiasm!

“Hm hm hm... Very well... Let’s end this...!” Deus slowly walked over to Wataru, lying face down in the center of the crater his body had created.

“Wataru... You were pretty fast for a human, but not quite enough to entertain me for long.” When he reached Wataru, the dark aura surrounding his hand billowed out as he raised his arm to deliver one final chop!

At this rate, our protagonist would be killed by Deus the Demon Lord! He hadn’t even saved Aria’s parents!

“Wataru...!” Aria clasped her hands as if in prayer! ...She had happily joined in on the “Deus” chant a couple of paragraphs ago... but never mind that! Things are serious, now!

Deus’s chop flashed down at Wataru at the speed of 1200 km/h!!! “This is the end!”

Wataru was at the brink of death! Will this be the conclusion to our story!? But worry not, Dear Readers! Wataru was invincible! An ordinary, invincible

teenager!

Therefore...!

Wrrrrssssshhhh!!!

“How...!?”

It was only natural that Wataru, who had been lying on the ground face-down, suddenly moved around behind Deus’s back at supersonic speed!!!

“Damn!” Deus cursed as he leapt out of range! “How did you teleport like that!? You can use magic, too!?” Deus implored, panicking!

“Magic? Give me a break, you think I can use magic!?” Wataru answered brazenly. “I just moved really fast!!”

Deus widened his eyes in astonishment! It was only natural. Wataru just pulled off “teleportation,” something that should have only been possible through magic, with nothing but his own muscles! I think we can cut our Demon Lord a break for being surprised!

“Anyway, Demon Lord... That punch of yours just now was awesome! It finally woke me up!”

“...Oh?”

“To be honest, I was still tired from that stupid book review contest... So first, I gotta apologize to you!!!”

Deus and the crowd were dumbfounded!!! Utterly dumbfounded!!!!!!

“Y-You dare mock me...!?” Deus was enraged!

But Wataru was unfazed!! “A fighter should always enter combat in his prime condition...!!! That’s why I have to apologize!!!” Wataru shouted with his standard *Nio*’s expression of solemnity!

“That’s amazing, Wataru!”

“I admire your *bushido*, Wataru...!”

Both Aria and Résistance chimed in with the compliments this time, as if they hadn’t been chanting for Deus until just a moment ago!

“Hmph! Make any excuse you want! You still stand no chance against me!” Deus kicked off the ground, rapidly closing the distance between them!

Wataru, on the other hand...! “Come on...! I’ll catch whatever you have to throw at me!!!!” The fighting teen reached out with both arms, ready to defend himself against the attack!

His stance was no other than the *Occlupanist*, a move passed down from ancient Tokyo.

(*Occlupanist — A move invented by a young man who studied Judo in Edo (now Tokyo). It is a stance that seamlessly transitions from defensive to offensive as the user outstretches both arms to catch the opponent’s attack, then uses that motion to deliver a throw. According to legends, the young man used this move to defeat the *Tengu*, a famous monster that lurked in Edo. The scene of that battle has been depicted in some traditional paintings. A similar move has been passed down through the art of Sumo wrestling, and many experts credit *Occlupanist* as its root. This reinforces the deep ties between Judo and Sumo wrestling. [11]) “Rrraggghhh!” With a fearsome growl, Deus approached Wataru at incredible speed!

However, Wataru calmly grabbed the sleeve of Deus’s coat, and seamlessly executed an *Ippon Seoi Nage*, a powerful Judo throw!

Deus was astonished! We can only imagine the terrifying sensation of the sky and the ground switching places in the blink of an eye! The Demon Lord was slammed into the ground, creating another massive crater!

“Gragh!”

“Now we’re even!!” Wataru declared!

If this had been an official Judo match, the referee would have called the doctor! However, this was no ordinary match... it was nothing less than a deathmatch!! There were no rules, referees, or doctors to stop them!!!

“Rrr! This isn’t over!” As Deus groaned in pain, he quickly jumped to his feet and moved to punch Wataru with his dark-aura-covered fist!

“Grrraaggghhh!!!” The clean hit blew Wataru away!

But, incredibly, Wataru was smiling! In the middle of this intense battle of life and death, he was actually smiling!! “This is it! This is the feeling... of adrenaline!!!” Wataru pulled a mid-air backflip and expertly landed on his feet! “From here on out... I’ll show you what it means to give 120%!!!!!!” With a dauntless grin, he produced the *hachimaki* from his pocket! The Exploding-Blood Demon Slayer, the very same legendary *hachimaki* passed down to him from his ancestors!!! (As seen in his battle against Wolfman in Chapter 5!) Of course, Deus didn’t understand the significance of this! He cast Wataru a curious look!

Unbothered, Wataru tied Exploding-Blood Demon Slayer around his head in one fluid motion! He quietly spoke. “Now my hot-blooded energy is multiplied a hundredfold...!!! But that’s not all!!!!!!” Wataru lowered his center of gravity, and flexed his every muscle in his body! “Hragh!!!!!!”

Braghlllaghhhh!!!!!!

H-How could this be!? There was the sound of an explosion, and a red aura erupted all around Wataru! The tails of the *hachimaki* around his brow, as well as every strand of hair on his head, rose up in defiance of gravity like a flame!



Wataru's powerful energy gave him the presence of *Kongorikishi* himself!

"Let's go!!! Exploding Bloodrush!!!!!" Wataru shouted to the heavens, his face painted in wrath!!!!!

"H-How much energy does he—!?" Deus was in shock!

"Now... It's going to get a little hotter in here...!!!!!!!!!" Immediately, the average temperature within 10 kilometers of Wataru rose by 5 degrees!!!

"Using magic to harden your fists, huh...? You got one cool move, Deus...!"

"I appreciate the compliment," Deus replied smoothly!

Still, beads of sweat could be seen on the Demon Lord's face! His instincts, built and refined through the eons of his existence, were waving giant red flags in his mind! Of course, fleeing was not an option for Deus the Demon Lord!

Wataru, in the midst of his roaring red aura, slowly spoke! His crimson *hachimaki* was waving in the wind!!! "But...! Even more than your magic fists...!! I think my hot-blooded fists...!!! Are a lot hotter, badder, and stronger...!!!"

To be continued in the next chapter: "Wataru's Badder!!!"

*Sources

[11] *Traditional Martial Arts in the Eastern City* — Isekai Tensei Publishing

Chapter 8: Wataru's BADDER!

As the battle between Wataru and Deus suddenly grew in intensity, the crowd that had gathered to watch the duel was at the brink of rioting!

"Hey! That human started glowing red all of a sudden!"

"I have no idea what's happening, but that human's bad!"

"Did it get a little hotter out here...?"

"I have a bad feeling about this. Let's help Master Deus, right now!"

The monsters started drawing their assorted weapons! There were orcs with clubs, animated skeletons with spears, and even a goblin with a custom-modified Payblade made for battle, to name a few examples! The voltage of the scene was amping up!

Just when things were coming to a head, Résistance turned around to face the crowd! "Listen up! All of you!"

The horde of monsters all turned their attention to her! Aria, who had been standing by Résistance's side until a moment ago, had already fled the scene to avoid being caught up in the riot! Aria was always opportunistic!

"Y-You're Résistance... The ex-Master," said one of the monsters, recognizing her!

"What are you doing here!?" shouted another!

"You think you can just come and go as you please!?" yelled another, outraged!

Résistance drew her sword and held it up for all to see! "Anyone who dares to interrupt their duel will have to go through me!" she valiantly declared!

Her presence intimidated the crowd for a little bit, but the monsters did not back down!

“Wh-Who do you think you are!?”

“Yeah! You’re the one who betrayed our Demon Lord!”

“Don’t think we’re gonna go easy on you if you don’t get outta our way!”

The horde of monsters, about eighty strong, glared menacingly at Résistance! But Résistance’s eyes only gleamed with fighting spirit as she held her sword tighter and held her ground in this critically dangerous standoff!

“Bring it on...!” she growled!

As the mandated neutral arbiter in the duel between Wataru and Deus, Résistance couldn’t allow anyone or anything to interrupt the battle!! She had no intention of helping either side, but she also had an unyielding will to prevent anybody else from disturbing that neutrality!

One of the orcs waved his club in the air! “You don’t scare us! Come on guys, let’s get her!”

The rest of the monsters joined in, assaulting Résistance all at once! She was facing down eighty monsters! At first glance, her chances appeared to be hopeless! ...But lest you forget, Dear Readers, Résistance had been a member of the Four Masters until mere days before! Her strength far exceeded that of any horde of run-of-the-mill monsters!!

“Hragh!!!” Résistance shouted, and swung her sword in a horizontal arc!

Brrrraggghghhhh!!!!

Her sharp longsword sliced through the air! An instant later, the monsters that formed the frontline of the horde went flying like bowling pins struck by a perfect strike from a professional bowler’s bowling ball!!

“Wh-What kind of attack was that!?”

“Dammit, she’s too strong!”

Now that the monsters had witnessed Résistance’s attack, they began to fall back, one by one!

Résistance pointed her sword at the horde! “What’s the matter!? Keep ’em coming!” she shouted aggressively.

Résistance's battle against the horde of generic fantasy baddies had begun!

"Here goes!!!!!" Wataru shouted! His hair was spiked up to the sky and his body was enveloped in a crimson aura! "Pnch!!!!!" Wataru's punch came screaming in at over 2000 km/h!

"Grr!" Deus just barely dodged Wataru's fist, but even the shockwave caused by its passing left a cut on the Demon Lord's cheek! "H-How dare you... You damaged my face!" Deus rushed at Wataru, fully utilizing both fists for a storm of punches!

The force generated by Deus's fists cracked the ground below them, and sent vibrations through the earth rumbling out to the horizons! No one, absolutely no one could have survived being on the receiving end of such devastatingly powerful blows! Not anyone, ever!! ...Save for one!!!

"Nice try...!"

"Im-Impossible!!!" Deus could not believe his eyes!

Wataru was standing still exactly where he was before, his *hachimaki* still tied around his head! He stood motionless, despite having taken the full force of Deus's fists!! His back and arms were kept straight, just like those of an army cadet being berated by a drill sergeant!!! Not only did Wataru remain unmoved through the Demon Lord's punches, but he hadn't suffered so much as a scratch!!!! His unimaginably powerful core had allowed him to remain unwavered!!!!

"While you harden your fists with magic... I did you one better, by achieving the unachievable! I'm hardening my entire body with my hot-blooded energy... You don't stand a chance now!!!" Wataru explained proudly, his pure confidence making up for any lack of logic in his tactics!

"...Huh?" Deus failed to conceal his confusion! "B-But I see that my attacks didn't do any damage..." The Demon Lord stopped attempting to punch Wataru and teleported away! He put some distance between himself and Wataru! "By the way, Wataru... 'Exploding Bloodrush,' was it...? What in the world is that..?"

"Hmph." Wataru scoffed. "Who the hell monologues about their tactics mid-

battle?”

“Hm. You have a point.”

Have they no concern for their readers!? Let us pause the story for a moment, Dear Readers, and allow *me* to monologue about Wataru’s tactics! Exploding Bloodrush* was a hidden skill used by the Exploding Blood, a branch of martial arts passed down through the firstborns of the Ito clan since the beginning of time! That’s right. While Wataru had mastered various martial arts from around the globe, Exploding Bloodrush was his heritage and identity!

(*Exploding Bloodrush — The user releases every last bit of hot-blooded energy that lies dormant in their body to power up their corporal instruments to the absolute limit. Because of the exclusive nature of Exploding Blood, details of this move still remain a secret. The FBI, CIA, KGB, and other world powers’ intelligence agencies have tried and failed to uncover the secrets of Exploding Blood. Some researchers have suggested that Exploding Blood is the very reason why Japan has abstained from the development of nuclear weapons. Of course, the Japanese government has denied this theory, at least on official records. [12]) Wataru took a deep breath from within his red aura, and tightened his fists!

“Rrrrraaaggghhhhhh!!!” He threw supersonic fists at Deus, one after another!

“Gragh!” Deus expertly maneuvered his magically-enhanced hands to deflect Wataru’s punches, but his defenses were unable to keep up for long!

“Brkthrggh!!!”

“Argh!”

One of Wataru’s punches had slipped through Deus’s guard and hit him square in the ribs! Deus jumped back in agony, but Wataru had no intention of giving Deus any room to breathe! He leapt to close their distance again, and used the momentum to deliver a jump kick!

“Enough!” With infernally sharp reflexes, Deus grabbed Wataru’s leg and twisted his core to toss Wataru into the air!

“Not bad!” Wataru said in the air, and landed on his feet! He was grinning with excitement!

“Grr...!” In contrast, Deus’s expression was twisted in pain!

Wataru’s Exploding Bloodrush had caused Wataru’s power to grow exponentially! Deus, using all his might, had barely managed to dodge the attack! Worse yet, Deus was afflicted with diabetes! His stamina was considerably lowered compared to when he had been healthier!

“No... This is far from over!” Deus shouted, and thrust his magically hardened fists before him, forming a stance akin to the Fighting Mantis of kung fu!

A layman would have been utterly intimidated by the Demon Lord’s stance! But now that Wataru had activated Exploding Bloodrush, Deus’s posturing came off as nothing more than cheap bravado!

“Hraaaaaaaaaaaghhhhh....!!!” With a deep inhale, Wataru lowered his center of gravity, placed his left hand at his waist, and thrust his right hand forward! His stance was no other than the Exploding Blood signature stance, the Hot-Blooded Fighter!!

It was now five o’clock in the morning! The faint, pre-dawn light shone upon Wataru and Deus as their gazes locked, both of them maintaining their fighting stances!

Without deviating from his stance, Deus broke the silence! “Wataru Ito... You’re not *of this world*, are you?”

Wataru was completely shocked! “...How did you...!?”

Aria was supposed to be the only other keeper of his secret!

“Hm hm hm... Because we’re the same, you and I!”

“Wh-What do you mean!?” Wataru implored!

This ultimate battle was nearing its conclusion...!!

Meanwhile, Résistance’s fight against the eighty or so monsters had devolved into chaos!

“Rrrragghhh!” Résistance valiantly continued swinging her sword! With each powerful swing, a handful of monsters were knocked aside! She was nothing short of a beautiful, spectacular knight, tearing the faceless mooks to shreds

with the overwhelming force of a musou heroine! Even so, after having fought for hours her stamina was at its very limits! Her blade was beginning to slow as her breathing grew heavy! Suddenly, a swing of a desperate orc's club struck her in the back!

"Grr!" The shock of the strike knocked Résistance to one knee! Her face was distorted in pain and exhaustion! Seeing this opportunity, the monsters all swarmed Résistance!

(Wataru... I'm sorry...!) As she foresaw her end, she closed her eyes and drooped her head in resignation!

At that very instant...! The morning sun rose above the distant horizon!! The divinely warm light of the morn enveloped the entire wasteland!!!

"GDLSUMHLTMSRAAM attack!!!!!" A booming voice echoed through the area!!

Flllllaassssshhhhhh!!!!

A powerful flash redirected the sunlight, assaulting the corneas of the monsters!! The monsters began to panic, blinded by the sudden burst of light!

"Aaagghhh! I can't see!"

"My eyes! My eyes!!"

"Wh-What the hell was that flash!?"

"Wh-What just happened!?" Résistance turned around, having luckily avoided the light by looking down at the ground!

"Rrrrraagghhhhhh!!!!!" A bald man built like a mountain was energetically striking a bodybuilding pose! Double Biceps, to be more exact, with both arms raised to the heavens to accentuate his upper-arm muscles!!!!

"Wh-Who are you...?" Résistance asked, dumbfounded!

"Nice to meet you! My name is Garland! Garland the fighter! I came to save you, at Aria's request!" Garland explained with a glimmering smile!

"A-Aria...?" Résistance repeated! Aria peeked her head around Garland's mountainous body! "Aria!"

“Are you okay, Résistance!?” Aria ran over to the former knight, and began healing her with magic!

“I thought you ran away...”

“I would never! I went to call a friend who could help you in combat!”

“That’s me!” Garland chimed in!

“But how did you get him here in just a few hours...?” Résistance asked. “Can you teleport with magic, too?”

Aria shook her head! “Nope, I hit him up on Bookface Messenger!”

“Oh, right!” Résistance admitted! “I didn’t think about that!”

That’s right! Using the popular social media app Bookface, people of this world could communicate with people far away! Now, many of our Dear Readers might protest this turn of events! “Wait a minute, there’s no way that a fantasy world has social media!” Calm yourselves! That’s just your internal bias against Isekai cultures talking, Dear Readers! Of course any fantasy world can have social media!

Having received Aria’s SOS message, Garland had sprinted through the desolate wasteland in a mere three hours, where it would have taken any normal man at least ten!

“Okay, Résistance! You can finish them off!” Aria encouraged Résistance after healing her wounds!

“Right!” Résistance stood, and took up her sword!

Surviving the very serious, life-or-death situations up to this point had mended their relationship! Now, Aria and Résistance were unmistakably bonded by friendship!

“Garland, was it!? Thanks for the hand!”

“No need to thank me! My family’s trapped in that castle, too... I’m going to defeat these monsters and save them, once and for all!” Garland lowered his stance, and flexed his entire body!!! “Hrmph!!!!!”

Brrrrrrrippppppp!!!

His thin white shirt tore to absolute shreds!! Garland's chiseled-like-a-Greek-statue body was fully revealed!!

"You monsters...! I'm going to save my wife. My daughter. The people of my town...! Let's go, Résistance!!"

"You got it, Garland!!"

Résistance and Garland charged at the still-blinded monsters!

"Rrraaggghhh!"

Résistance's elegant flicks of the sword! Garland's dynamic clothesline! Each and every move they made were one-and-done attacks!! The powerful duo began taking down the horde of monsters for good!

Meanwhile, Wataru was utterly confused by Deus's revelation!

"We're the same...!? What the hell do you mean!?"

"Just as it sounds! Like you, I came from the other world... From Japan!"

Wataru kept up his guard, but his brain was flooded with questions!

"Hmph! Confused...? I was surprised when my messenger told me that someone named Wataru Ito had defeated Résistance. It's a Japanese name if I've ever heard one..."

"Keep talking...!" Wataru urged with the expression of a *Nio*!

Deus continued, maintaining his Fighting Mantis stance! "Until a century ago, I was living in Japan. I suffered diabetes from my unbalanced diet and lack of exercise. As a result, I died young..."

"O-Okay...!" Wataru couldn't decide if the backstory deserved the serious tone Deus was using!

Deus kept talking, as stoic as ever! "After my death, I met a beautiful goddess in the darkness... I made some deals with her, and I was reborn as a Demon Lord with a body strong enough to withstand diabetes...! That being said, I was never actually cured of diabetes, so I needed to watch my diet."

"Wh-What the hell are you talking about...!?!?" Wataru was losing him! "I was

living in Japan until recently, too! But I didn't meet any goddess! My body's the same as it was when I left!"

The Demon Lord frowned! "Hm... Perhaps you were merely 'transported' instead of being 'reincarnated'..."

**Note to Editor. #1: Replace all instances of 'reincarnation' with 'transportation.' - Simotti*

**Note to Editor, #2: NVM. I don't really care. - Simotti*

"What say you, Wataru? Will you join me? I think we'd get along, given our common background..." Deus proposed with a grin!

Wataru slowly shook his head! "No!!!"

"No? Why not, Wataru? If we join forces, we could conquer this world."

"Drop it!! I'll never join you!!"

"I see. How unfortunate... Hrmph!" Deus leapt out of his Fighting Mantis stance! He jumped high into the air, coming down with a powerful punch!!

Wataru awaited Deus's attack in his Hot-Blooded Stance!

"Htblld!!!"

DDddrrrrraaggggggmmmmmm!!!

They collided with incredible force! Wataru leaned into the impact and caught Deus's punch with his outstretched right hand!

"Rrrrragghhhh!!!" Wataru immediately attacked with his left hand!

The instant he touched Deus, the Demon Lord's body dissipated into nothing!!

"An illusion!?"

"Hm hm hm... Magic has more uses than you know...!" The real Deus had in fact snuck behind Wataru while his illusion jumped up! The Demon Lord immediately kicked at Wataru's back!! But Wataru would not go down so easily!!

“Bck!!!” With the reflexes of a man with eyes in the back of his head, Wataru crouched to avoid Deus’s kick! The Demon Lord’s foot only grazed Wataru’s *hachimaki*!! Immediately, Deus used his teleportation spell to create plenty of distance between Wataru and himself!

“Didn’t think you had enough stamina in you! I’m surprised!!” Wataru said as he slowly rose to his feet!

“I’ll give you a momentary peek behind the curtain before I kill you,” Deus countered. “My stance has a special effect of accelerating my internal generation of magic...!”

That’s right! While maintaining the Fighting Mantis stance, Deus had revealed that he was reincarnated from Japan to confuse Wataru, while buying himself enough time for his magic reserves to regenerate!

“I see...! Hey, Demon Lord! I got a question for you!!!” Wataru asked with a solemn expression!

“...What is it?”

“Demon Lord... What is your goal in the end for all this???”

Deus the Demon Lord gave an ominous grin! “Exterminating the weaker species. That is all. The strong survive while the weak perish. Humans are weak, so I’m going to exterminate them.”

“...You used to be a human, too!!”

“That is precisely why I know how weak humans are, now that I’ve become a Demon!”

“I get it...! It just means you’re going to be taken down by a weak little human!!” Wataru taunted!

“Hm hm hm... You really believe you can best me?”

“You heard me!!”

“You puny human!” Deus was suddenly enraged, stretching his hands up to the heavens! He flexed his fists, and the auras of darkness around them doubled in size! His fists were hardened more than ever! “Take this!” Deus sank into the Fighting Mantis stance once more, then charged Wataru!

Zdrrrrrrsshhhhhh!!!

“...Don’t point your empty fist at me!” Wataru spat out.

Deus’s fist had stopped a mere fraction of an inch before Wataru’s face! Wataru’s counter uppercut had struck Deus clean in the gut!

“Wh-What the...!?” The Demon Lord groaned!

What is art? This is a question that has plagued mankind since the dawn of time. Most of us live our entire lives without finding the answer. But we, Dear Readers, are met with the great fortune of witnessing the very answer to that eternal question! Wataru, his right arm twisted into his enemy’s abdomen with the force of every molecule in his body, his *hachimaki* fluttering in the wind... and his *Nio* expression. This tableau was the ultimate form of art, ascended from the flawless mastery of martial arts!! If Michelangelo, the famous Italian Renaissance painter, had been there to witness it, he would have undoubtedly painted our ultimate fighting teen as a masterpiece that would inspire any human that beheld it until the end of time!!

“All right, Deus... I’ll take you on a relaxing flight, 800 meters into the air...!!!”

Deus was knocked directly up into the air! He struggled mid-air in an attempt to stop his rising, but his body refused to obey his brain’s commands! “Wh-What’s happening!? I’m burning up!”

“Just now, I poured my hot-blooded energy through my fist and into you!! An ordinary body won’t be able to contain the overwhelming hot-bloodedness!!!” The ground rapidly continued to fall away from Deus, and before long he reached the height of 800 meters!!! “So...”

“Wh-What the...!? Urgah!” Deus began writhing in agony!

“All you’re going to become... is a cloud of ash!!!”



“Im-Impossible...! Impossible...!!!!!” Deus continued to writhe in disbelief! But there was nothing he could do from 800 meters up in the air!! “I can’t die! Not... like this...!!!!!”

Wataru gripped his right fist, and powerfully thrust it towards the heavens!!!

“See ya!!!!!”

“Rrrrraaagggggghhhhhh!!!”

Kablam!!!

Kabbbbllllllaammmmm!!!!

Kkkkkkkkaabbbbbbblllllaaaaaammmmmmm!!!!!!

Deus to the Demon Lord exploded! His ashes cleanly dissipated into the sky!! There was not a smidgen of Deus the Demon Lord left!!!

Allow me to explain what just happened, Dear Readers! That was the one-hit-kill super-secret ultimate-attack of Exploding Blood, Exploding Uppercut!!

(*Exploding Uppercut — One of the ultimate moves of Exploding Blood, the most powerful martial art passed down only to the firstborn of the Ito clan. When the user connects with an uppercut to his opponent’s abdomen, the Exploding Blood master pours an overwhelming amount of hot-blooded energy through his fist. The enemy’s body, unacclimated to hot-blooded energy, will reject it and finally be reduced to ash from the sheer heat of the hot-blooded energy. Exploding Blood contains a number of secret attacks, but Exploding Uppercut is revered as the most terrifying attack of them all from its dangerous and inhumane effect. That being said, only an extremely limited portion of Exploding Blood has been under the scrutiny of research. It is very possible that there are much more terrifying moves hidden within the secretive teachings of the martial art. [13])

“Deus the Demon Lord... I didn’t expect him to come from the same world I did...! He was a formidable foe...!” Wataru relished the post-battle relief as he gazed up at the divinely beautiful morning sky!

Deus had mentioned some curious keywords, like “goddess” and “reincarnation!” Was he foreshadowing some important plot points to come!? I

don't know yet!!!

Meanwhile, the battle of Résistance and Garland vs. the monsters was nearing its end! Most of the monsters had lost their wills to fight upon witnessing the defeat of their Demon Lord!

"This battle is over! Surrender!" Résistance commanded with a swing of her sword!

"It-It can't be...!"

"There's no way..."

"Our Demon Lord was... defeated by a human...!?"

The monsters had lost all hope along with their leader! One by one, they dropped their weapons and began walking out into the wasteland!

"...We're not going after them?" Garland asked Résistance!

She slowly shook her head! "There's no need. Most monsters have no order by themselves. Now that they've lost their leader, Deus, they won't try to fight us anymore."

"I see..."

After all of the monsters had left the scene, a crowd of people came rushing out of the castle! These were the people the Demon Lord had abducted from around the world!

"Mom! Dad!" Aria spotted her parents in the crowd! She ran to them!

"Oh, Aria!"

"Aria! It's been so long!"

Aria and her parents lovingly embraced! At the same time, Garland was reunited with his wife and daughter!

"Daddy!"

"You're both alive! Are you hurt?"

"No, we're all right, honey!"

“Good... Thank goodness...!”

Both Aria and Garland enjoyed reuniting with their families!

Wataru had taken off his *hachimaki* and dropped his Exploding Bloodrush aura, and was now sobbing profusely at the sight of Aria and Garland’s heartwarming reunions with their loved ones! Anyone would have struggled to hold back tears upon witnessing such a moving event, and Wataru was a kind-hearted teen with a *samurai* spirit! It was only natural that manly tears were now rolling down his cheeks!

He noticed Résistance standing nearby off to the side, and called out to her. “Résistance...”

“You really are an amazing man, Wataru. You really defeated the Demon Lord... I’m amazed, to be honest.”

Wataru wiped his tears! “I’m always headed for the top, that’s all!”

Résistance cracked a smile. “That’s Wataru, all right...”

“You said it! So, Résistance, what are you going to do now???”

“Let’s see... Maybe I’ll travel the world. You made me want to strive for the top, too.” Résistance turned her smile to Wataru! It was cute!!

“Okay!! If you want to challenge me, I’ll accept it anytime!!!” Wataru returned a smile, pointing a thumb at himself!

“I know you will. Will you hold onto this until we meet again?” Résistance produced a silver necklace from her pocket! It was the silver, snake-wrapped cross necklace that she had bought during their shopping trip a few days prior!

“Are you sure!?” Wataru asked.

“Yes. I want you to hold onto it.”

“Okay, I will!” Wataru took the necklace!

“Farewell, Wataru!”

“See you!!!!!”

What an absolutely, whole-heartedly, perfectly wrapped-up happy ending!!!

Wataru defeated the Demon Lord, Aria and Garland were reunited with their families, and Résistance embarked on a solo journey to become a stronger warrior than before!!!

The day after the deadly battle between Wataru and Deus, Wataru, Aria, and her parents had returned to the Sky Kingdom!

“We’re here, Wataru! It’s *our* home!”

“So we are!!!”

Of course, Wataru was included in Aria’s “our”! Since Wataru had come here from another world, the Sky Kingdom had unmistakably become another home to him!!

“You should continue living in our hospital, Wataru.” Aria’s father spoke up. “You saved us all. Please make yourself at home there.” He was a well-built man with kindly eyes!

“All right, thank you!”

“Please, Wataru. You and Aria defeated the Demon Lord. We can’t thank you enough,” Aria’s mother added. She was a slightly curvy and calm-mannered woman!

By the way, Aria couldn’t be bothered to explain Wataru’s true origin to her parents!! For all they knew, he was just a fighter traveling around this world!!

“Aria’s dad... Aria’s mom... You’re too kind!!! Thank you!!!!!!” Wataru threw himself on his knees in gratitude! The impact of his groveling smashed a part of the paved road to pieces, but let’s not worry about that!

That’s when a young man approached them! He was clad in the red uniform of a royal guard, and carried a lance in his hand!

“...You’re *the* Wataru, aren’t you?”

“Wtf!!” Wataru said in surprise. “What do you want!?!?” he jumped up, immediately on guard!

“Woah, take it easy. I’m a royal guard of the Sky Kingdom. Our king wishes to have an audience with you. Will you accompany me?”

“What!?”

So, Wataru and Aria were brought to the royal palace by the guard!

“This is incredible, Wataru! I never dreamed of stepping foot in the royal palace!”

“Right, this is surprising! ...Why were we brought here, anyway!?”

They walked down a long hallway after the guard!!

A few minutes later, they arrived at the throne room! They walked in through a giant door to find an old man seated on the throne!

“You’ve come...” He uttered.

He had a full, solemn beard and glaring eyes! His clothes were not too flashy, but definitely exquisite! He was none other than the ruler of the Sky Kingdom!!!

“You’re... Wataru, right? The one who defeated the Demon Lord.”

“Yes, sir!!!” Wataru energetically responded!

“I see. I can tell from your eyes that you are the upstanding man I expected you to be. That Demon Lord had caused us quite a lot of trouble. It is amazing that you defeated him all on your own... I thank you, on behalf of myself and my kingdom.”

“No need for thanks, sir! I just wanted to face powerful foes! Sir!” Wataru declared!

“Hm, I see... In that case, there is a favor I wanted to ask you.” The king’s eyes gleamed with a particular light!!

“What is it, sir???”

“A few days ago, I received word that a dragon had appeared in a village not too far from here. If we leave it alone, it might attack our kingdom, too. I want to ask you, a man powerful enough to defeat the Demon Lord, to hunt down this dragon.”

A dragon!!! Dragons are usually reserved as the most powerful beings of a fantasy world!!! Naturally, this would be an extremely dangerous adversary!!!

Flustered, Aria turned to Wataru! “Wh-What will you do, Wataru!? A dragon is much more powerful than any run-of-the-mill monster! You have to think this through!” She sounded more concerned than ever!

“Hm. She’s right.” The king solemnly chimed in. “Rumor has it that the Demon Lord had once approached the dragon in an attempt to coerce the beast to join his ranks. Evidently, the dragon was too powerful even for the Demon Lord to tame, and he was forced to retreat. Think on this carefully before you give me an answer.”

What a shocking revelation! Even the Demon Lord Deus was unable to best a dragon! What will Wataru do!? ...Of course, he had already made up his mind!!!

“No problem! I’ll do it!” Wataru accepted with the expression of a *Nio*!

Why? Easy! It was Wataru’s destiny as a hot-blooded fighting teen to seek out those stronger than him, no matter the situation!!

“Hm. I was hoping you would say as much. Thank you.” The king’s stoic expression shifted to one of relief! Age-appropriate tiredness appeared on his face!

“Let’s go, Aria! Let’s go find the dragon, right now!” Wataru turned right around, ready to sprint out of the throne room!

Résistance’s silver necklace shimmered around his neck!

“W-Wait for me, Wataru!” Aria hurried after him!

“Try to keep up! The dragon’s not going to wait around for us!!!”

Wataru wondered what the dragon looked like, and what attacks it would use against him!! His heart was already pounding with excitement!!!

And so, Wataru Ito carried on through this dangerous world full of magic and monsters with nothing but his own fists!!!

This has been *WATARU!!! The Hot-Blooded Fighting Teen & His Epic Adventures After Stopping a Truck with His Bare Hands!!*

THE!!!! END!!!!

FOR REAL THIS TIME!!!!

*Sources:

[12] *The Secrets of Exploding Blood ~ How Japan Survives Without Nukes* — Isekai Tensei Publishing

[13] *The Very Short List of Known Exploding Blood Attacks* — Isekai Tensei Publishing



Special Side Story: No Holds Barred! The Duel at the Toy Shop!

This episode takes place immediately after (the new) Dynamite Powerchord disbanded at the end of Chapter 3!

Once Wataru, Aria, and Résistance had all said their goodbyes to Rick, they cheerfully left the rehearsal studio!

“Phew! That was a close call, but I’m glad we made it out all right!” Wataru commented!

“Right!” Résistance agreed!

They were nostalgically looking back on the travesty that had just taken place at the Wind Continent Ultimate Rock Band Tournament two days previously!!

Aria stopped in her tracks and spoke up! “Wataru... Aren’t you forgetting something?”

“Hm!?” Wataru crossed his log-like arms in confusion, as he had no idea what Aria was insinuating! “Forgetting something...? What are you talking about!?”

“When you dragged us into the band, you said that you’d buy us the new Payblades! Remember!?”

“...Right!!!! I did say something like that!!!!”

If this promise has slipped your own memories, Dear Readers, go back and read Chapter 3 again! Buy another copy of the book, while you’re at it!!

“Well, now that you remember it, let’s go get those Payblades right now!” Aria said, tugging at Wataru’s arm!

“R-Right now!?”

“Of course! Come on, Résistance, let’s go!”

“Wait, I’m going, too!?”

So, Wataru and Résistance reluctantly allowed Aria to drag them to the toy store!!

Toys ‘B’ We was the largest toy store in the Sky Kingdom. It was a continental chain that had grown rapidly all over the Wind Continent, famous for their variety of products as well as for low prices derived from buying their inventory wholesale. Their Sky Kingdom location was located around a corner from the end of the main-street market.

“Here we are!” Aria declared with wholehearted joy! “Welcome to Toys ‘B’ We!”

The giant, warehouse-like store was painted in vibrant colors to better appeal to children! Its walls were adorned with a cute cartoon of their mascot character, a green goblin!! This was truly a world of wonder, stuffed to the brim with the hopes and dreams of children!!!

“Huh. I didn’t know they had a toy store around here! It looks like a pretty fun spot!” Wataru said!

Résistance spoke up as well! “Indeed. I’ve never been to this location of Toys ‘B’ We, but from its size, I’d imagine that they’re well stocked.”

When all was said and done, they both seemed pretty excited about this, too! The trio stepped into the store!

Wataru was astounded! “This place is huge!!”

The expansive store was stuffed to the brim with shelves, all packed tight with toys! They seemed to have everything imaginable here, from normal toys like stuffed animals to strange objects covered in eerie designs none of them could decipher the use of! To Wataru, it was practically a theme park! It was two o’clock in the afternoon, and the store was already bustling with families!!

“Come on, the Payblade section is this way!” Aria slipped through the crowd with a brimming smile! She was much more excited about this than a seventeen-year-old should probably be!

Résistance chuckled. “Hey, Aria. Don’t get carried away.”

The trio had made it to the Payblade section of the Toys 'B' We! A group of boys were hanging out by the display, their glimmering eyes nailed to the newest Payblade models!

"There are a lot of different Payblades, huh!?"

Wataru was right. The displays were packed tight with various models, each one in packaging decorated with cool-looking designs that appealed to boys, like a dragon or phoenix!

"So, which one are you getting???" Wataru asked.

Without a moment's hesitation, Aria picked up a particular model! "This one!" The box had the same green goblin that was drawn on the exterior of the store! "This one's the Blade of Justice Mk-II (Toys 'B' We Exclusive Edition)! Like it says right here, you can only get it in Toys 'B' We!"

"Cool!" Wataru was genuinely uninterested!

"The normal Justice Blade Mk-II has a red body with silver trim, and the dragon symbol in the center! But this Toy 'B' We exclusive edition has a blue body and gold trim! Best of all, the symbol at the center isn't a dragon, but Goblob! The mascot of Toys 'B' We! Remember the character we saw when we came in?"

"Cool!" Wataru was still genuinely uninterested!

However, Wataru was faced with one serious problem!

"Wait a minute, Wataru. You said you'd buy us the new Payblades if we joined the band, but you don't have any money, do you?"

"...Right!!!! I forgot about that!!!!!"



As Wataru was not of this world, naturally he didn't have money that he could use in this world!

"Let's have Résistance pay, for now!!"

"What!?" Résistance couldn't help but snap at the sudden suggestion!

"I'm sorry, Résistance! You're the oldest! I swear I'll pay you back!" Wataru fell to his knees in tears and groveled shamelessly! The impact of his forehead against the floor cracked the store's foundation, but we won't worry about that now!

"Ugh... All right, I give up..." she relented!

Wataru was actually still seventeen, the same age as Aria! Résistance, at twenty-four, was by far the oldest of the group!

The party headed to the register, and Résistance reluctantly paid for Aria's Payblade!

"Thank you, Résistance!" Aria hugged the newly purchased Payblade box!

"Hey, Wataru. Once you get some money from taking down the Demon Lord, you have to pay me back for this."

"Oh, yeah! If I remember!!"

If and *only if* Wataru remembered would he pay her back!! Just as the trio were about to exit the store, a strange voice called for them from behind!

"Stop right there!!"

"Th-That voice...!" Sensing a powerful presence, Aria cautiously turned around!

There was a young boy standing there! He seemed to be about eleven years old, and his brown hair peeked out from under the red baseball cap perched on his head! He was wearing an oversized, neon yellow hoodie, but his most noticeable characteristics were the sharp front teeth poking out of his mouth! This kid looked just like the protagonist of a certain toy-battling anime from around a decade ago!!

"You know this kid, Aria?" Wataru asked!

“I do! He’s Storm! He’s in the fifth grade at Sky Elementary School. He’s the second best Payblader in this city, after me!”

The buck-toothed boy, Storm, frowned at this! “Heh, in your dreams! I got you beat by a mile, Aria!”

“Hmph! As if! As of today, we’re tied at 200 wins each, and 100 draws! Our powers are completely even! And because I’m older, I break the tie! I win!”

“That doesn’t make sense,” Résistance coldly interjected!

“Looks like you snatched up a new Payblade, Aria! Why don’t you battle me with that model right now, and we’ll see who’s the real top Payblader of the Sky Kingdom, once and for all!?”

“Bring it on! There’s not a chance in hell that an eleven-year-old snot-nosed little bitch will beat me!” That’s the main heroine of our series, Dear Readers! “You may have earned the title of ‘The Sky Kingdom Prodigy,’ but I’ve earned the title of ‘That One Girl You Shouldn’t Go Near!’ Let’s decide who rules this city!”

“Why are you proud of having that title!?!?!?” Wataru shouted! It was true, though; no grade schooler should have been hanging out with Aria!

“Okie dokie, let’s battle! Payblade Arena, initiate!!!” Storm thrust his right fist up towards the ceiling!

Bo-wowowowowowow...!!!

H-How could this be!? The floor between Aria and Storm began to vibrate before sliding open to reveal a 3 meter by 3 meter area! From that area, a giant blue plastic object emerged! It looked like a shallow bowl, large enough to fit a grown adult!

“What is this???”

“It’s a Payblade Arena, Wataru! We spin our Payblades in here and do battle!” Aria explained!

With a *click!* the blue Arena completed its emergence! Aria was ready for battle!!

“But how does this Arena come out of the store’s floor like that!?!?!?”

Wataru asked with natural curiosity!

“How...? This is a Toys ‘B’ We! Of course they have an Arena ready to come up when you yell for it!” Storm declared! That doesn’t actually explain anything, but you should be used to that by now, Dear Readers!

“That’s right, Wataru,” Résistance joined in. “You can call for a Payblade Arena to appear in any Toys ‘B’ We franchise location. Any Payblader knows that.”

“Résistance! You’re... one of them!?!?” Wataru asked!

“I dabble in it.”

“Let’s do this, Storm!” Aria shouted adamantly, and tore open the box for her new Justice Blade Mk-II (Toys ‘B’ We Exclusive Edition)! From it, she produced a blue Payblade with an eye-catching gold trim and a distinctive Goblob crest! “What are you going to use, Storm?”

“I brought this!” The boy pulled a Payblade out of his pants pocket! It had a white body, pointy thorn-like protrusions, and a tiger symbol in the center!!

“I see. A Deadly White Tiger V... A custom model with extremely high attack power, designed to quickly end the battle, one way or the other!”

“Good eye! Your Justice Blade Mk-II’s a defensive model, but my Deadly White Tiger V can break through it!”

Wataru tilted his head curiously. “Résistance, what the hell are they talking about?”

“In short, Aria’s Payblade specializes in defense, while that kid, Storm’s, Payblade specializes in attack.”

“Huh. There’s a little more to this than I thought!”

Each and every Payblade was different! Each model was made with a tendency towards either attack or defense, for example, or a balance right down the middle!!

“You ready, Aria?” Storm grinned, his buckteeth shimmering in the light!

“Yeah, Storm! Let’s do this!”

A visible tension began to grow between the two standing at the opposite ends of the Arena! It was the calm before the storm, no pun intended! Wataru and Résistance watched without a word! After a few moments of silence, Aria and Storm both raised their Payblades to strike a special pose! They looked like baseball pitchers winding up for a fastball!

With their arms raised, they shouted in unison: “Three! Two! One! Let it rain!!!”

Brrrsshhhhh!!!

Just as they finished their chant, Aria and Storm threw their Payblades as hard as they could into the Arena! The pointed bottoms of the Payblades struck the smooth, shallow bowl of the Arena’s floor, and the Payblades began spinning at incredible speed around the battleground! They were two mini-typhoons ready to collide!! Like two fighters sizing one another up for combat, Deadly White Tiger V and Justice Blade Mk-II circled clockwise around the Arena!! The Payblades spiraled closer and closer, until eventually they clashed in the dead center of the stadium!!!

Grararakkkkk!!!

A metallic clashing rang through the store as the Payblades bounced off each other with a burst of sparks!!

Wataru was both shocked and excited! “H-Hey! What’s the age range on those things!? That’s a fire hazard!!”

“Exciting, isn’t it?” agreed Résistance. “Payblades are made with plastic cores and metal blades. When they collide, the blades grind against each other, creating that signature spark-shower.”

There were so many sparks, in fact, that they would have been immediately banned in Japan! This kind of crazy toy was only available in a fantasy world where people were much less concerned with trivialities like safety!!

Grarararararar!!!

Aria’s and Storm’s Payblades continued grinding against one another!

“Not bad, Aria!”

“Not too bad yourself, Storm!”

The two Paybladers watched the clashing tops with their fists clenched!

“What are they doing???” Wataru asked!

“Let me explain,” Résistance answered with a serious expression! “Payblades are treated with a special magic spell on their way out of the factory.”

“M-Magic!?” Wataru couldn’t contain his amazement!

Résistance confirmed! “That’s right. The spell allows the Payblade to spin faster in proportion to its user’s mental energy.”

“That’s incredible!!”

He was right; it was incredible, and shocking to boot! Aren’t you glad you stuck around for this special episode, Dear Readers!? All Payblades were enchanted with a spell that allows them to spin faster the more their users concentrated on the battle! They were in a fantasy world, after all! Any kind of nonsensical technology could be explained away with magic!

“That’s why they’re both focusing their mental energies into their Payblades like that to make them spin faster.”

H-How surprising! Payblading was not mere child’s play, but a high-level sport that involved a keenness of mind and a deep reserve of mental fortitude!!

“Payblade... It’s so deep...!”

At this moment, Aria turned her gaze to Storm, and cracked a taunting grin! “By the way, Storm...”

“What!?”

“I heard that you got a big fat zero on your test the other day...”

The color drained from Storm’s face! “H-How did you...!?”

“Ohohohohoho, I have my sources!”

Storm’s Deadly White Tiger V immediately began to slow down! Aria’s Justice Blade Mk-II, still spinning at full speed, began pushing it back!

“Wh-What’s going on??? What was all that!?”

“Think, Wataru. Payblades spin faster the more their users concentrate. That goes both ways.”

“You mean... Storm’s Payblade slowed down because his mental state weakened!?!?”

“That’s right! That’s why Aria executed that emotional assault!”

Apparently, attacking your opponent’s mental stability was a crucial strategy during Payblade battles, where the users’ concentration spelled the outcome of each battle! This was no ordinary children’s toy!

“And didn’t your teacher scold you for forgetting to do your homework, Storm?”

“Grr...!”

“And for goofing around by swinging a broom around during clean-up.”

“G-Grr...!”

Aria’s words flew into Storm’s heart like daggers! His Payblade rapidly lost its momentum with every cutting remark!!

“How does Aria know all that, anyway???” Wataru asked!

Aria turned to him! “It’s elementary, Dear Wataru! Since mental sparring is at the core of Payblading, it’s a battle of information!” she proudly explained! “I always keep an eye on the school news to make sure I know every embarrassing detail about these kids!”

“Aren’t *you* embarrassed? You’re seventeen,” Résistance coldly countered.

Aria seemed completely unmoved. “Ohohoho, it’s no use, Résistance! I will never lose focus during a Payblade match, no matter what anyone says to me! I have no shame!”

Such incredible mental strength! This was definitely the Aria we’ve come to know and love! Storm’s Payblade clashed with Aria’s, and was blown back to the edge of the Arena!

“That was close!” Storm muttered, cold sweat dripping down his face! “If my Payblade flies out of the Arena, I’ll lose on the spot...!”

Somehow, it seemed like his buck teeth had lost their glow!

Aria cackled! “Ohohohohohohoho! Give it up, Storm! You’re just a child, after all! You don’t stand a chance against a grown woman like me!”

“Wh-Who should we root for!?” Wataru asked!

Résistance considered the question for a moment. “I’m beginning to think that Aria should lose.”

“...I agree!!”

Wataru and Résistance decided to root for Storm! Aria’s status as our main heroine no longer meant anything!!

“Go get her, Storm!!!”

“You got this, Storm! You can do this!”

“W-Wataru!? Résistance!? Why have you betrayed me!?” Not even Aria could conceal her total dismay at this shocking twist!

“Betrayed...?” Wataru asked.

“Don’t you get it, Aria? You’re totally the villain here!” Résistance yelled back!

Hearing them, Storm tightened his fists in determination! “S-So many people are rooting for me...! I can’t lose... not yet! Not now!!!”

Lest we forget, they were still standing in the middle of the Toys ‘B’ We store! Please, Dear Readers, refrain from shouting inside any store!

“Rrragggghhhh!!! Here goes!!!” Storm roared! “*Super Payblade Mode!!!!!!*”

At that instant, his buck teeth began shining brightly once more! His teeth glowed brighter and brighter until... the light turned gold!

Fllllllassssshhhh!!!

“Wh-What the!? The kid’s teeth turned gold all of a sudden!!”

“What’s going on!?”

Wataru and Résistance couldn’t conceal their astonishment!

Aria explained this time, making a face as if she was biting into a lemon! “That’s Storm’s secret attack, ‘Super Payblade Mode!’ It’s an incredible move

where he pours all of his magic into his buckteeth to make them glow with a golden light!”

“What???”

“So!?”

“My buckteeth are my one defining personality trait as a Payblader! By making them shine like gold, I boost my mental energy, my *vibe*, to ten times its normal amount!” Storm explained, restlessly wiggling his protruding teeth! In short, it seemed that he got really hyped!

Résistance turned to Wataru with a serious expression! “I see... Wataru, since mental energy is the cornerstone of Payblading, ‘hying himself up’ may be a formidable move.”

Immediately, Storm’s Deadly White Tiger V began gaining momentum, spinning faster and faster! It glided across the Arena at incredible speed, and crashed right into Aria’s Payblade at the center! A dull, metallic *clang* like the clashing of swords echoed through the store! Storm’s top, spinning a little faster than Aria’s, took its place in the center of the stadium, as Aria’s Payblade was pushed to the edge!

“Impressive, Storm!” Despite being in a bit of a pinch, Aria wore a confident smile!

Storm found the smile suspicious! “What!?”

“I have... an ace up my sleeve!” Aria produced a green leaf from her pocket! “Let me explain. This is a Rainbow Herb used to create potions! Just one bite of this, and all of my stress will disappear, and I’ll see the world in a whole new light!”

“What the...!? How’d you get an herb like that, Aria!?” Storm implored!

“Ohohoho, my parents are doctors. It was a piece of cake!” Aria explained proudly! She popped the Rainbow Herb into her mouth and chewed on it! “Oh, hell yeah!” she shrieked! “Now we’re talking!!!!”

Instantly, Aria entered an unnatural high, and a rainbow-colored aura began to emanate from her body!

“Hey, Aria!” Wataru was confused! “Hey! Is that, like... Are you sure about this!?!?!?” Even this novel has to draw the line somewhere!

“Don’t worry, Wataru. Rainbow Herbs are completely safe,” Résistance calmly explained! “Aria’s magic is much more effective at healing than they are, but Rainbow Herbs have alcohol-like properties. Eating one would give you a little rush.”

“O-Okay! So what’s that rainbow aura around her!?”

“Placebo.”

“That’s all because of a trick on her mind!?!?”

Ordinarily, the Rainbow Herb wouldn’t possibly have that kind of effect! But being absolutely off her rocker was Aria’s defining trait! I wouldn’t put it past her to start shooting out rainbows if she thought she was able to!!

“Aaaaagghhhh! This is the final battle, Storm!” Aria shouted, her pupils disconcertingly wide!

Her Justice Blade Mk-II spun faster!

“Bring it on, Aria!”

Storm wasn’t backing down! With his buck teeth glowing gold, he awaited the attack!

“Wh-What’s going to happen!?!?”

“It’s anyone’s game, now...!”

Wataru and Résistance watched intently! Time seemed to slow for the maximum dramatic effect! At last, the two Payblades collided in the center of the Arena!!

Graghragggagggagararkakkarkagkakrkkkagakrk!!!!!!!!!!

The metallic sound was heard again, and sparks spewed from the quaking Arena!! It was top-versus-top! The players’ minds were colliding along with them!! The victor of this fight would be the Payblader with the better vibe!!!

“Rrrraaagggghhhh!!!” Storm shouted!

“Yeeeeeeeeeeeeaaaaahhhhhh!!!!” Aria shouted back!

“Excuse me!” interrupted a Toys ‘B’ We store associate! “Please keep your voices down inside the store.”

Even with Payblade Arenas built into their foundations, the Toys ‘B’ We corporate policy did not allow for their customers to make such a ruckus! At that instant, Storm’s Payblade was shot out of the stadium with a particularly loud *clang* and flew straight into the associate’s gut at the murderous velocity of 200 km/h!

“Hrgagrgghhhhhh!!!” The associate groaned!

Wataru rushed over to him! “A-Are you all right!?!?”

This was no joke!

Meanwhile, Aria and Storm stared out at each other after their hardcore battle!

“You got me, Aria! It’s amazing that you could get that hyped just from a placebo! When I grow up, I want to be anything *but* like you!”

“I don’t know if I should take that as a compliment, but that was a good match, Storm!”

They shook hands! They had both come down from their highs! Storm’s teeth no longer glowed, and Aria wasn’t emitting any rainbow auras!

“Hey, Aria! Come heal this poor sales associate!!” Wataru shouted, holding the man who was foaming at the mouth!

“Oh, coming!” Aria quickly approached the associate and healed him with her magic!

At the end of the day, it was Aria and her placebo effect that won her the Payblade battle!

“Banned...?”

“Yes. I’m begging you. Please, never come back.”

A few minutes had passed since the conclusion of the Payblade battle. Wataru, Aria, Résistance, and Storm were brought to the simple office in the

back of the Toys 'B' We by the same associate who had been knocked out earlier. The office was very neatly organized, and was empty save for the five of them. The associate had sat down in the chair and immediately told the group that they were banned.

"Now, wait a minute! Why are we banned!?" Aria angrily demanded.

"Your commotion intruded on the shopping experiences of the other customers in the store," the associate calmly countered.

"What gives you the power to ban us, anyway!?" Storm said, flustered.

"I'm the manager here, so I do," answered the manager, who had been fooling us all into thinking he was a mere sales floor worker!

"We're clearly in the wrong here!" Wataru said! "Let's just walk away!!"

"Wataru's right. Calm down, you two," Résistance added.

Aria gritted her teeth in anger and growled. Storm, sitting beside her, pulled his Deadly White Tiger V out of his pocket.

"Hey, manager! My name's Storm! If you want to ban us, you gotta battle me, first!"

"Storm! There's no way that's going to work!!" Wataru said.

"If you win, we won't ever show our faces here again! But if I win..."

"Then no one is banned." The manager finished Storm's sentence with a confident smile.

"...What!? You accept!?!?" Wataru asked!

"Yes, of course," answered the manager! "It's funny, isn't it? That he would think he could challenge me, the manager of a Toys 'B' We, the holy ground of Payblades..." He reached into his pocket and reverentially produced a Payblade! Much to their surprise, this Payblade glowed with a purple, ominous light!!!

A bead of cold sweat dripped down Aria's face. "Th-That's... Darkness Mad Fang GX!! The super-rare Payblade only available as a limited edition three years ago!!"

The manager chuckled. "Correct. Storm, Aria... You can fight me two against

one. You still won't stand a chance."

"You're on!" Aria shouted, yanking her own Payblade out of her pocket.

"Hm. Interesting. I'll keep a close eye on this battle." Even Résistance, who had remained the level-headed one throughout the series, couldn't conceal her excitement.

"Wh-What is this world...!?!?!" Wataru couldn't help but wonder out loud. Wataru Ito, the man who stopped a truck and ended up in another world! This fantasy world was still full of mysteries waiting to be discovered!!

Postscript

Back when I was training on my own in Colorado to become the most powerful fighter in the world, I met a mysterious Black American man named Luke. Even though he was an American, Luke was fluent in Japanese and an expert at *katana* and *shuriken*. That's right: Luke was a ninja.

I was only twelve at the time, and didn't know much about this world. At first, I was convinced that there could be no ninjas in America. Of course, that was just my ignorance talking. There are many ninjas hidden in America, too. I discovered this through fighting them and witnessing their true strength.

I had moved into Luke's house (a cave somewhere in the Rockies) and dedicated myself to my training, day in and day out. Since Luke was a modern-day ninja master, his training was brutal. I remember numerous occasions when I had nearly given up. Every time I was close to giving up, he would gently tap me on the shoulder and cheer me up by free stylin' to some sick beats. That's right: Luke was also a gangsta rapper.

Three years later, having learned the true meaning of fighting and how to drop sick rhymes from Luke, I returned to Japan. Before I left, this is what Luke said to me: "Shimocchi, you're a good writer. Why don't you write a novel about fightin' one day? I'm sure you'll win an award for it." I took it as a joke at the time... but it turned out to be true. I'm thinking about flying to Colorado soon to thank Luke, my mentor, in person.

That reminds me. I can't forget about Isekai Tensei Publishing. Throughout my writing process for WATARU, I have referenced some publications by this company in order to nail the realism of combat. I couldn't have done this without them. I have listed these references at the end of each chapter. They'll make for interesting reads, I'm sure of it.

There are plenty of other people I need to thank. My editor, who patiently read through and annotated my completely bonkers manuscript. RELUCY, who drew my off-the-walls characters. And, of course, my Dear Readers who are

reading this postscript right now. Look forward to more adventures of Wataru and company.

—Simotti

Behold!

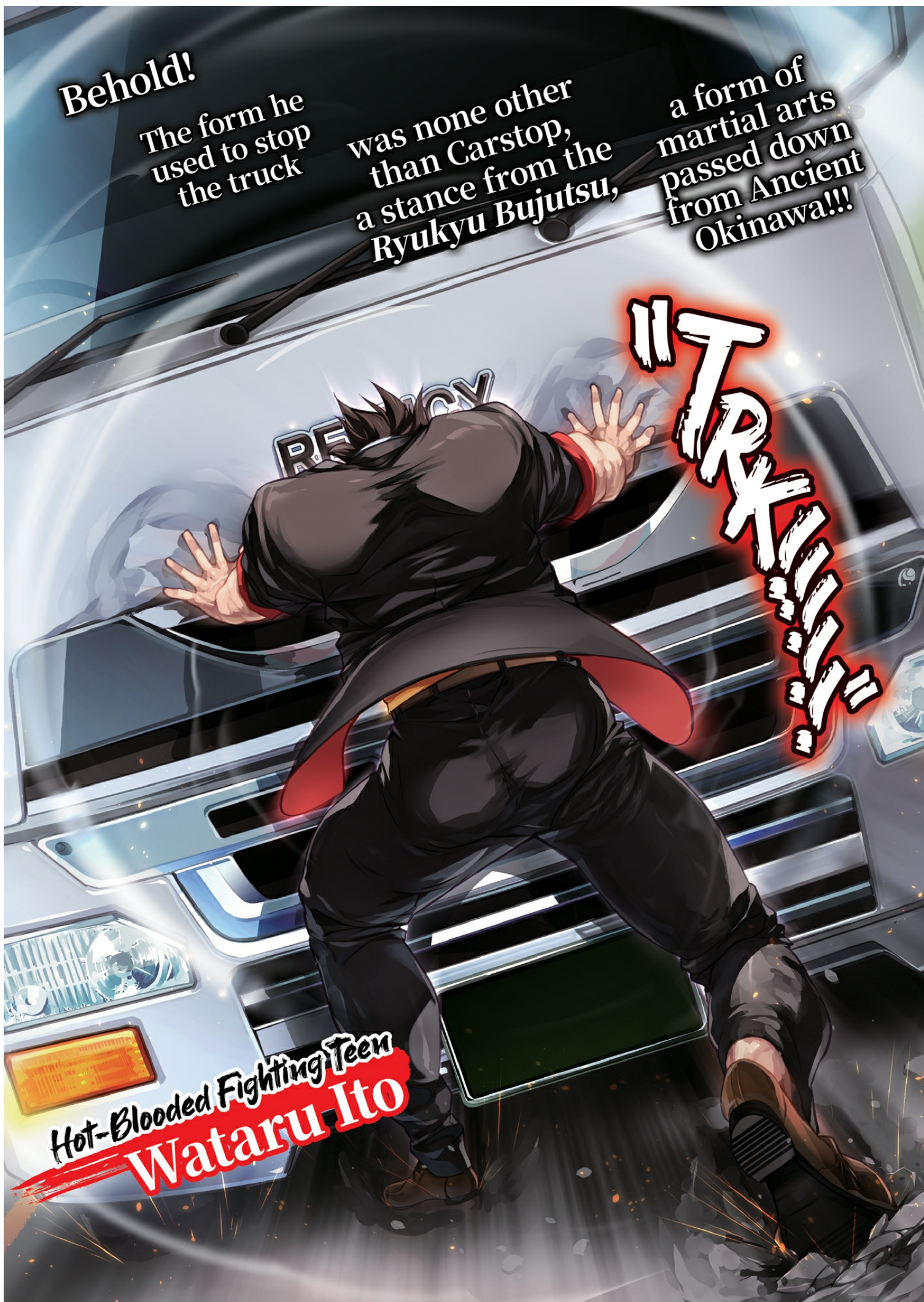
The form he
used to stop
the truck

was none other
than Carstop,
a stance from the
Ryukyu Bujutsu,

a form of
martial arts
passed down
from Ancient
Okinawa!!!

「**TRUCK**」

Hot-Blooded Fighting Teen
Wataru Ito





"Apologize to
Résistance,
now!!"

"Wouldn't you
like to know?
Bleh!"

"Hey, Aria!
Watch the
attitude!"

"No need,
Wataru."

Fantasy World Resident
Aria

*One of the Demon
Lord's Four Masters*
Résistance



How
could this be!?
Résistance's
clothes were
torn to shreds
by the sheer

As soon as
her lips closed
around the steak,
Résistance fell
speechless!!
Then....!!!

deliciousness
of this one
bite of steak!!!

Bonus Short Stories

The Gang's All Here! The Four Masters' Karaoke Party!

This episode takes place sometime before Wataru's epic arrival into this world. The Four Masters of the Demon Lord's army had congregated in a top-secret facility somewhere in the Wind continent. One of them was Résistance, a young woman clad in pitch-black armor. Then, there was Binker, a fairy who stood 1'6" tall and possessed the power of flight using the translucent wings on her back. The remaining members were Cyclo Psjohn and Wolfman, but both of them were too paranoid to show their true forms, even to Résistance and Binker. This day, Wolfman had magically transformed himself into an orc, and Psjohn had the form of a goblin. In the dimly lit, 30' by 30' room, the quartet sat on the provided couches around a table.

Suddenly, Résistance stood up, mic in hand. "Uh, well... Now that all of the Four Masters are here, let's begin..." she inserted a beat, maintaining a dead-serious expression, "...the Demon Lord Army Karaoke Party!"

"Woo!" The remaining three Masters thrust their hands into the air!

"All right," Wolfman (currently disguised as an Orc) growled. "Brace your asses to be serenaded!" boasted the mysterious and bloodthirsty man of a seemingly unknown race!

That's right! The Four had gathered at a karaoke joint, of all places! The Four Masters had sworn an unbreakable oath to never miss their monthly hangout, no matter what! That being said, this was their very first attempt at karaoke... their other events include *ohanami* (the traditional Japanese pastime of staring at flowers) and athletic competitions!

"Let's jump right in..." Wolfman grabbed the remote-control device from the table and punched in a few digits! A few moments passed, and an ear-splitting chord came from speakers on the ceiling! "I'll start things off with this new metal track I've been digging, '*Destroyer of Hell*'!" He snatched the mic from

Résistance and began to yowl through the song! Wolfman's singing (if I dare call it that) was so painfully painful that the other three Masters instinctively covered their ears to protect them from being vocally torn to shreds! *Bam!* Having sung through the entire song as aggressively as possible, Wolfman set the mic down with a sigh of accomplishment! "Phew... That felt good..."

"I'll go next. I picked *Vacance Sombre* by my long-time favorite punk band, Darker."

Vacance Sombre means "Dark Holiday." Lame!

"What kind of song is that...?" Binker muttered with much concern!

Résistance began rocking out hard to the lyrics!

Darkness!

Pitch black.

Sky of the abyss.

The fallen angel rests twice a week...

The pain caused by her singing was doubled by the fact that she was completely tone-deaf! "Yeah... That's the stuff," she declared with a sense of accomplishment, even as Psjohn (still in goblin form) snatched the mic from her hands.

"I'm next! Here goes *Isekai's a Monster Man's World!*" Surprisingly, Psjohn chose an *enka* (Japanese blues) song! Of course, any respectable fantasy world had *enka* songs! After a little bit of old-timey intro music, Psjohn started in with the catchy melody of the *koto*! "*Oh... Life in an Isekai is hard on a monster...!*" He sang with passion, his voice hitting all the right notes, even the challenging arpeggios! H-He was amazing! Psjohn even demonstrated impeccable vibrato control!

But in the middle of Psjohn's performance, Binker began writhing! "It-It hurts!" she shouted! That's right! Binker, as a fairy, would disintegrate upon hearing a beautiful song! Surely you are wondering, Dear Readers, why she even showed up in the first place!

"Hey, Binker's in pain!" Résistance tried to shout over the song! "Stop

singing!”

“*And Isekai’s... A monster... man’s... wooooooooorld...!*” Psjohn was utterly lost in the world of his own song.

“Agh! I’m melting!”

“Binker, no!”

At the end of the day, they averted the crisis of Binker’s disintegration, but this would be the first and last time the Four Mastersever held a karaoke party for their monthly gathering.

Then, they lived happily ever after!

Special: A Day in the Life of Résistance!

This episode takes place sometime before Wataru’s epic arrival into this world. One day, the Demon Lord Deus was sitting on his throne and munching on a cookie when he called up his messenger, the slime.

“How may I serve you, Master Deus?” the slime asked, jiggling his gelatinous, blue body.

“You’re here... *chomp, chomp...*” Deus halted his cookie-munching. “I recruited Résistance as a Master a few months ago. I saw potential use in her strength... But, she’s a human, after all. Who knows when she’ll betray me? Go spy on her for the day and tell me what she does.”

“Yes, Master!”

The slime departed on his super-important duty to observe a day in the life of Résistance.

After becoming a Master, Résistance began guarding a particular forest. Human adventurers attempted to pass through the forest on occasion in order to reach the Demon Lord castle; Résistance was tasked with stopping them.

At eight in the morning, she stood at the entrance to the forest, wearing her pitch-black armor and eerie, skull-themed helmet. She was to stand on guard for any humans that might try to make their way through the forest. The slime

watched her from behind a nearby tree.

(All right,) the slime thought. (I'm going to make sure Master Résistance doesn't slack off on the job...!)

The slime watched Résistance for four straight hours, only to find that her work ethic was impeccable. Of course, all she did was stand there at the entrance to the forest. Since absolutely nothing was happening in the area, the slime let a yawn slip out. *(This is boring... I wonder if Master Résistance doesn't get tired after just standing there for four hours.)* At that instant, a wolf appeared from a patch of shrubs, and approached Résistance with a growl. *(A w-wolf!? It's a dangerously ferocious animal!)* The slime panicked. But, much to its surprise, Résistance showed not a hint of fear. Rather, she took off her helmet, revealing her beautiful blue hair and attractive face.

With a brimming smile, she called to the approaching wolf. "Innocent Fang... It's you again."

(Huh...?) The slime couldn't believe his ears... or whatever part of him functioned as ears. *(What did she just call that wolf...?)*

As the slime watched, Résistance produced a hunk of raw meat from a drawstring bag on her belt and tossed it to the wolf. The beast jumped, catching the piece of meat in midair, and devoured it. "You always have a good appetite, Innocent Fang." Résistance petted its head. She seemed to be enjoying the softness of its fur.

(I see...) The slime thought. *(Master Résistance feeds that wolf every day. But why the weird nickname?)*

Then, drawn by the scent of the meat, the more adorable animals like dogs and cats emerged from the bushes.

"Oh, Black Lightning Beast, Abyss-Wandering Crimson Eyes, and Evil-Eyed Holy Beast!"

(What is with those names!? And all the adjectives!) The slime wanted, so desperately, to ask out loud.

"Don't worry, there's plenty for all of you!" Résistance began feeding all of the animals that approached her.

Watching her bizarre habit, the slime reached a particular conclusion.

After returning to the castle, the slime went directly to Deus in order to report his findings.

“So, Master Deus. At first glance, Master Résistance was merely having fun with the animals of the forest... But those strange nicknames are undoubtedly some kind of spell. I suspect that she’s cast some sort of curse on the animals.”

“No, that’s...” Deus started to answer, awkwardly.

“Is something the matter, Master Deus?”

“I think Résistance just likes animals.”

“But what of those spell-like nicknames?”

“Just... Let her be.”

“Huh?”

The slime had yet to learn the symptoms of “emo.”

Special: Beef Up! Wataru’s Work Out Tutorial!

On one fateful day...!

“998! 999! 1000!”

Wataru was engaging in hard-core push-ups in his room, when Aria barged in!

“Wataru!”

“What is it, Aria!?” Wataru leapt to his feet!

Panting, she declared, “I want you to train me!”

“What!? Train you!?”

“Yes! I want to be strong like you, Wataru!”

“Then let’s work out!”

Aria’s expression turned in obvious revulsion!

“That’s too much work. Don’t you have any ’roids?”

“No, you idiot!” Wataru’s temper exploded! “If you want to get stronger, you start by working out to build your body! Muscles aren’t built in a day!”

“Can’t I please just inject something in my muscles? Pretty please?”

“No!”

“Then I’m left without a choice. Will you show me which workouts to do?”

Wataru crossed his arms in a dramatic display of superiority! “Beginners start with hand-held weights!”

“Weights? Simple enough.”

“Yet difficult to master!” Fantasy worlds had weight-training weights too, of course! Wataru produced a matte-black hand-held weight from under the bed. “Let’s start with one of these for starters!”

“Okay!” Aria took the weight from Wataru! “It’s so heavy!?” Aira was in utter shock! The weight was much heavier than it looked! “How much does this weigh...!?” Aria asked, holding up the weight with all of her might! Large beads of sweat rolled down her face!

“200 kilograms!”

“What the hell!?” Aria dropped the weight, unable to bear the strain of holding it any longer! The 200-kilogram hunk of metal crashed to the floorboards, smashing them into pieces! One of the splinters struck Aria right between the eyes! “Aggggghhhhh!!” Blood spewed from the vicious head wound!

“Are you okay!?!?”

No need for concern, of course! She could use healing magic!

Then, they lived happily ever after!

The Irresistible Fragrance of Résistance’s Perfume!

This episode takes place when Wataru, Aria, and Résistance were walking through the forest en route to the Demon Lord’s castle!

Aria suddenly blurted out! “You smell nice, Résistance.”

“Hm? That was out of the blue.”

“I’ve been noticing that citrus scent for a while.”

“Oh, I see. Well, you may not have guessed it, but I’m pretty picky about my perfume,” Résistance boasted!

“Where do you get your perfume?”

“A fragrance store called Tiger’s Hole.”

Wataru interjected, crossing his arms in a proud display! “Tiger’s Hole? Is that what the hidden dragon saw?”

“The hidden what...?”

“Noting... Never mind!” Wataru was dejected! He shouldn’t have expected this joke to fly in a fantasy world, or with the majority of our Dear Readers, for that matter!

“Can I borrow it, Résistance? I never used perfume before!” Aria asked with enamored anticipation!

“Oh, really? Sure, you can use it.” Résistance produced the bottle of perfume and handed it to Aria.

“Wow...!” Aria muttered to herself as she opened the bottle! Despite her history of bizarre behavior unbecoming of any self-respecting light novel heroine, Aria was finally acting like a teenage girl her age, showing fascination with perfume! “Don’t mind if I do...” Aria brought the bottle up to her face... and started gulping down the perfume, straight from the bottle! This was as bizarre as bizarre could get!

“Stop!” Résistance was dumbfounded!

“What!?!?!?” Wataru shouted!

“Bleh!” Aria snapped! “What the heck!? This tastes like crap!”

“Of course it does!” Résistance countered! “You’re not supposed to *drink* it!”

“What...?” Aria stared back at her with a look of utter disbelief, as if to mirror our collective expression! “I thought this was how you used perfume...”

“No! You spray it onto your body!” Résistance explained!

“I-I didn’t know...” The more you know, Aria!

Résistance sighed! “This perfume was expensive, you know!”

Aria refused to apologize! “Now, now, Résistance! You can just get another one! Tiger’s Hole has a selection of perfumes, right?”

“You really are a piece of work sometimes...”

“Hey...” Wataru started with a deeply grave expression! “Does it have a selection of swords, too? Like one called Green Destiny!?!?”

“I really have no idea what you’re talking about.”

“What’s gotten into you, Wataru?”

Résistance and Aria remained confused.

“Dammit... They don’t get it!” Tears of fury welled in Wataru’s eyes!

Then, they lived happily ever after!

Special: Nurse ARIA, Savior of Lives!

This episode takes place sometime before Wataru’s epic arrival into this world. After her parents were abducted by the Demon Lord, Aria didn’t know that to do with herself. One day, she finally decided that nothing would improve by her moping around, so she sprung into action. The first matter she tended to was taking over her family’s clinic that had been run by her parents. Now that her parents were captured by the Demon Lord, Aria was the only one left to tend to it. Fortunately, she could wield powerful healing magic.

“All right! I’m going to use the power of my magic to resuscitate this clinic!” she proudly proclaimed, and donned her mother’s white nurse’s uniform.

This marked the legendary genesis of ARIA, the Non-Fighting Nurse!

“Hey Aria! Can you help me!?” A middle-aged man entered the exam room!

“Barr! From down the street!”

His name was Barr Frocket! A man who lived near the hospital, whom Aria had known since she was little!

“What’s wrong?”

“My stomach’s been hurting all day...” Barr sat on a chair, gently caressing his stomach.

Aria sat opposite him, and immediately began her super-professional examination!

“Did you eat anything weird yesterday?”

“Well... Come to think of it, I ate a rotten egg.”

“Rotten egg... I eat them from time to time, so that shouldn’t affect you at all.”

“For real!?” Barr was astounded!

Aria’s actions, as times, reached far beyond the understanding of mere mortals! No one should be surprised that she ate rotten eggs!

“Let’s continue,” she said! “Have you had any form of bleeding, recently?”

“Bleeding? I did trip and scrape my knee like a week ago...”

“That has to be it. You had a stroke.”

“It can’t be!” Barr protested! “My stomach’s hurting, and you’re saying I had a stroke!? A stroke has to do with the head or something, right!?”

“Bacteria entered through your scraped knee, and it’s turning your brain to mush.”

“To mush, you say!?”

“Like a smoothie,” Aira declared, completely deadpan!

“Th-That’s impossible... But, whatever. Can’t you heal me with your magic, Aria?”

She shook her head! “No, not even my magic can cure a stroke. I’ll prescribe you a dose.”

“What?”

Aria stood and procured a vial from a nearby cabinet! The vial contained a purple liquid of thick viscosity that looked obviously toxic!

“What is that...?” Barr asked!

“A medicine that will immediately end all of your suffering.”

“I can’t take that...”

“The pain from its side effects will come three days later and make you wish you were dead, but until then, you’ll be in euphoria.”

“I *really* can’t take that... And that won’t even cure a stroke, will it...?”

“Come on, Barr! Drink up!” Aria clasped Barr’s head and tried to force the contents of the vial down his throat!

“Stop!” Barr resisted with all of his might!

“Wait!” Aria shouted, as Barr freed himself from her grasp and darted out of the exam room! “I guess he’s all better, now! I did it!” Aria cackled!

Soon, the rumor of the murderous hospital spread like wildfire throughout the country, and no one ever came to her hospital, again!

A few days later...!

“Hmm... No one’s come to the clinic, recently... That must mean everyone’s healthy, now! I did it! I’ve saved my family business!” Aria took off the nurse’s uniform, and continued talking to herself with a brimming smile! “I’m starting to get hungry... I think I’ll go pick some herbs!”

Aria had no idea... that she would encounter the very man described in the title of this series in the field where she went to pick herbs!

Special: Pre-Reincarnation! A Day in the Wataru’s School Life!

This episode takes place before Wataru epically stopped a truck with his bare hands and was transported to a fantasy world!

Wataru Ito, the average teenager who devoted himself to his studies and workouts, was diligently attending classes in his high school, per usual!

“Can anyone solve this equation?” The teacher asked as he turned to his students, having written a mathematical equation on the blackboard!

“Yes, sir!” Immediately, Wataru raised his hand, his hot-blooded shout echoing through the entire school!

Crashsmashbashbegash!!!

In fact, Wataru had raised his hand at such an incredible velocity, that the shockwave from the gesture shattered every single window in the classroom!

“How many times do I have to tell you, Wataru?” His teacher said, exasperated. “No breaking the windows in my classroom by creating sonic booms.”

“Sorry, Teach!” Wataru simply apologized!

“Get it together, Wataru!” commented one of his classmates.

“Yeah, Wataru! How many windows have you broken this month?”

“Good ol’ Wataru!” The other students cheerfully ribbed Wataru! They had long gotten used to his insane hijinks!

Wataru’s next class was P.E! They were playing rugby, in which two teams attempted to carry an egg-shaped ball into the opponent’s zone to score points! Moreover, players were allowed to tackle any opposing player who held the ball!

The game began! The first student to hold the ball was Tota Animei!

“I’m gonna take it all the way!” As a sprinter who could run 50 meters in under 7 seconds, Tota ran across the field uncontested! That was, until he came to the final defense of Wataru, who could run 50 meters in under 2 seconds!

(Wataru...) Tota was determined! *(This is the day to prove that I’m the real athlete in our class!)* With burning ambition, Tota charged like a bullet train! His classmates cheered him on!

“Go, Tota!”

“Go for the goal!”

“You got this, Tota!”

If Tota could best Wataru in a sport’s match, he would have accomplished the giant-killing of the century!

“I’m gonna try to try!” Tota shouted.

Alas...!

“Stp!!” Wataru’s supersonically tackled Tota in the gut!

Gdrash!!!

“Gaaaaaaghhhhh!” Tota screamed in agony, even as he plummeted to the ground at 200km/h, letting go of the ball on impact!

Allowing me to explain to the privileged among our Dear Readers who managed to get their hands on this Special Episode. Wataru’s tackle was no other than the Raging Bull Charge, an attack devised in ancient China!

(*Raging Bull Charge — You might have heard that rugby was invented in England. You heard wrong. It was ancient China. The martial artists of old used to separate into two teams, and trained by attempting to carry a 200-pound metal ball into enemy territory, and tackling the opponent to stop them. This training method evolved into the sport of rugby we know today. In the Raging Bull Charge, devised through this training, the attacker tackles his opponent by charging like a mad bull from a low-to-the-ground stance. It’s a very dangerous move, kids. Don’t try it at home.) Tota was completely knocked out!

The P.E. teacher approached them! “Wataru! How many times do I have to tell you to go easy during class!?”

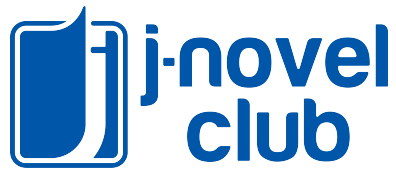
“Sorry, Teach! ...But, I can’t! If I went easy on him now, it would be an insult!”

“*That’s* your idea of sportsmanship!?”

“How could I insult my classmates by *not* tackling them with every ounce of strength in my body!? Isn’t rugby... a gentleman’s sport!?”

“What gentleman tackles at supersonic speed!?”

Wataru, the hot-blooded fighting teen does! He was a man among men, tackling every challenge that came his way with all of his might!!



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WATARU!!! The Hot-Blooded Fighting Teen & His Epic Adventures After
Stopping a Truck with His Bare Hands!!

by Simotti

Translated by Adam Seacord Edited by Michael Meeker

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Original Japanese edition published in 2019 by OVERLAP, Inc.

This English edition is published by arrangement with OVERLAP, Inc., Tokyo
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Ebook edition 1.0: September 2020